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# HAMPDEN COUNTY

1636 — 1936



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ST. GAUDENS' PURITAN STATUE, SPRINGFIELD

(Photo by Woodhead)

# HAMPDEN COUNTY

1636 - - - - 1936

*By*

CLIFTON JOHNSON

*Historian and Author*

VOLUME II

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1936

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*Education and Institutions*

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## CHAPTER XXXI

### *Education and Institutions*

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In the field of education, outside the public school system, the 'eighties are distinguished for two notable events. In 1885 Reverend David Allen Reed founded "The School for Christian Workers" and installed a department specifically for training young men in Young Men's Christian Association secretarial work. Five years later the name was changed to the International Young Men's Christian Association Training School and a piece of land purchased on Massasoit Lake, where a gymnasium, administration building and later a dormitory were built. From time to time new buildings have been added in the region of the lake itself, and today the Springfield college has an international reputation as being one of the best training schools in existence for its type of work. Its graduates have gone to the four corners of the earth, and to Springfield come young men from everywhere to take advantage of the excellent athletic plant and instruction offered at the college. It was here that the well-known game of basketball was invented by Dr. James Naismith.

In 1888 the American International College was established in Springfield. At that time it was known as the French-American College, and had been founded in Lowell, Massachusetts, three years before, under the name of French-Protestant College. The grounds of the college were located between State and Wilbraham streets, and finally the name was changed to "American International College." To this school for a number of years came foreigners bent on getting an American education, and this added a cosmopolitan touch to the cultural and educational life of Springfield. At times the students have been from as many as twenty-four different countries, but since immigration has been so closely restricted the college has changed, until today it is a compact and well-equipped general college, with new buildings and a schedule of courses allowing wide selectivity.

In June, 1679, the town of Springfield contracted with Thomas Stebbins, Jr., to build a schoolhouse for the sum of fourteen pounds, or seventy dollars in terms of present currency. In the early days no special committee had charge of the work of popular education. At town meetings and in the sessions of selectmen questions relating to teachers, pupils and school buildings were considered and settled. The need of direct supervision was afterwards met by the organization of school districts, each under the care of a local committee. But the district system did not make for progress. Petty jealousies and



SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE BUILDING

neighborhood quarrels divided the town and set district in opposition to district. Thus a high school, opened in 1827, closed its doors from 1839 to 1841 because of opposition from the outlying parts of the town. A superintendent of schools, the first officer of the kind in Massachusetts, was appointed in 1840, and again divided public opinion compelled the abolition of this office after something like a year's trial.

Meanwhile the State, under the leadership of Horace Mann, was calling for more efficient conduct of schools and for higher stand-

ards of instruction. In response to these demands the town began to consider the placing of all control in the hands of a central committee.

After much discussion the abolition of the district system was brought to pass in 1855. With this date and under the policy then inaugurated begins the modern school department of Springfield.

An outstanding early superintendent was Dr. Thomas M. Balliet, who assumed charge of the schools in April, 1888. He brought to his task a broad and thorough training in the philosophy of education and a mastery of the best methods of instruction. His inspiration and influence soon made themselves felt on teachers, committee and community. New lines of development were opened to meet the social and economic needs of the city. Kindergartens were placed on a permanent basis. The practical spirit of the time showed itself in the opening of cooking schools for both day and evening classes. Elementary evening schools were improved and extended and an evening high school established. With clear understanding of the city's industrial needs, Dr. Balliet encouraged the development of the manual training course.

Material equipment made rapid advances during the period from 1888 to 1904. Over a million dollars were spent on school buildings and some of these are recognized as among the best examples of school architecture in the country.

Tribute to the excellence of Springfield's school system is given in the attention her schools have received from students of education. In 1902 commissioners from New South Wales, officially delegated by their government to examine the school systems of the world, spent two days in Springfield, and in their report gave high praise to what they saw in this city. Many foreign delegates to the educational congress at St. Louis, in 1904, made a point of inspecting the schools of Springfield on their way home. Most significant was the visit of Dr. Paul Albrecht, minister of public instruction for Alsace-Lorraine, who made a special study of methods of teaching ancient and modern languages, a field in which Germans are supposed to be masters.

Springfield was the first city to appreciate the industrial needs of the age and make an effort to meet them. In 1898, after twelve years of experimenting, she entered upon a distinct and comprehensive system of manual and technical training. An independent high school



was then organized, of which the distinctive feature was that every student enrolled must take a four years' course in the mechanic arts, together with a full course in the usual academic studies. In the same year an evening trades school was opened, which at small expense to the city, offers free instruction and practice in fundamental trades. Meanwhile, the manual training, sewing and cooking lessons of the grammar grades took their place side by side with other school exercises in regular school hours.

The Technical High School, built in 1905, was the largest and probably the best equipped building of that type in New England. It was two hundred and thirty-eight feet long by two hundred and fourteen feet deep, and would accommodate nine hundred pupils. There were twenty-two class rooms in the main building, the largest planned for eighty pupils and the smallest for twenty-four. The building also included a gymnasium, lunch room and assembly hall.

Several private schools have added to Springfield's fame as an educational center. Among these is the MacDuffie School for Girls, which occupies the former home of Samuel Bowles. Here music, language and art are given careful attention and preparation is made for college.

Springfield has furnished many educators to the world, and especially college presidents. Among them are President Burr, of Princeton, President Holyoke of Harvard, President Hitchcock of Amherst, President Day of Yale, President Colton of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and Dr. William Harris, president of Columbia. The Dwights and Chaunceys are represented by the Yale and Harvard presidents of that name. Dr. William G. Ballantine, still a resident of Springfield, author of "Understanding the Bible," "Discovering Jesus," and other books, and translator of the Riverside New Testament, was president of Oberlin College from 1891 to 1896.

Dr. J. H. Van Sickle, for twelve years superintendent of schools in Springfield, was a vigorous, capable and progressive educator in his field. He was an inspiring speaker on school subjects and author of a number of text books. It was during his administration that the junior high school system was established.

William Orr, principal of the Classical High School from 1900 to 1910 was decorated by the Polish government for the educational work he did for them under the auspices of the Young Men's Chris-

tian Association. Among his writings is a "History of the Springfield High School," which was issued for the tercentenary celebration.

Another outstanding principal of the same school is Dr. William Colver Hill, who took the position in 1910, following Mr. Orr. His maxim, taken from Immanuel Kant, "No one has a right to do that which, if every one did it, would destroy society," has been impressed on the minds of the boys and girls who have come under his care in the last quarter century. Dr. Hill was given the honorary degree of Master of Arts by Harvard College and of Doctor of Letters by Mount Holyoke College.

Among the many others who have been prominent in the school life of Springfield are Principals Charles F. Warner and Carlos B. Ellis, Dr. Walter V. MacDuffie, Dr. Jessie M. Law and Alice M. Wing. A great honor came to Central High School in 1920 when it won the prized Harvard interscholastic scholarship trophy for the third time and thus gained possession, the only public school ever to win the honor.

In 1895 an institution, not of the public school system, but in its own way sponsoring an educational as well as recreational program, was opened in Springfield at the corner of State and Dwight streets. This was the central branch of the Young Men's Christian Association. Later it moved to more ample headquarters on Chestnut Street across Hillman from the Hotel Kimball. Its large gymnasiums, swimming pool, handball and squash courts, recreation rooms, and meeting halls attract those who are interested in physical, mental and spiritual development. The Springfield branch of Northeastern University is located in the building for the purpose of giving those who work by day an opportunity of college education at night. Another feature is the neat rooms, which under a benevolent hotel system provide inexpensive yet good lodging to transient young men as well as those without their own homes in the city.

Near the Young Men's Christian Association stands the Bay Path Institute, founded in 1897. To those who desire a business training in any branch of modern commerce, the Bay Path Institute is invaluable, both for its convenient location and excellent instruction.

Springfield was a city for over twenty-five years before a hospital was provided, but in 1869 land and buildings on the Boston Road

were appropriated for such a purpose. Up to this time there was little demand for such an institution, the average citizen fearing the blood poisoning and gangrene rampant in many a hospital of the period. The building used was an old farmhouse and beds were placed wherever possible, one end of a large room used as a ward, being curtained off for an operating room. The report of the City Hospital for the year 1880 mentions that seven patients were in the hospital on January 1. Of the forty-nine admitted during the year, seven died, a percentage of fourteen, which would hardly be a matter of pride at the present time.



MERCY HOSPITAL, SPRINGFIELD

In 1883 was organized the Springfield Hospital Association, and two years later Dorcas Chapin, widow of Chester W. Chapin, bequeathed to the corporation \$25,000 on condition that a like sum should be contributed, and that the city of Springfield should give to this corporation its hospital and equipment. This plan was carried out and on May 4, 1889, the dedication of the new hospital on Chestnut Street took place. The report for the year 1892 shows that two



hundred and sixty-one patients were admitted, with a death rate of 13.06 per cent. Nine of the fifty-one operations performed were major amputations, a startling contrast to four major amputations out of the 4,322 operations performed in 1925. Various additions to the hospital have been made from time to time and in 1914 the Frederick Wilcox Chapin Memorial Building was opened for patients. It was considered, then, the very best thing in modern hospital construction, and was for the accommodation of the wealthier class of private patients. 1932 saw the opening of still another large new building, accommodating three hundred and twenty-three beds. In connection with this is the out-patient department, social service, cancer clinic and other special divisions and laboratories. Five thousand and eighty-eight patients were admitted in 1934, with a death rate of only .047.

The Right Reverend Bishop Beaven purchased property on Carew Street in 1896 and with the Sisters of Providence established a hospital. This, though conducted by the sisters, was understood to have no distinction of class, race or creed in its service. The "House of Mercy" was brought into prominence for its fine work in connection with the return of American soldiers from the Cuban War. From four hundred and three patients in the hospital's first year, to 5,762 in 1934, is a long step. A private ward building, together with a new nurses' home, were completed in 1928, so that now Mercy Hospital can adequately accommodate three hundred and thirty patients and fifty babies.

The Health Department Hospital was opened in 1899 with a bed capacity of twenty-four. Various changes took place until, in 1931, a new Isolation Hospital, containing ninety-six beds, was opened. In 1934 the patients admitted numbered 3,291.

Daniel Baird Wesson presented his residence, in 1900, to his attending physician, Dr. J. H. Carmichael, for the purpose of establishing a homœopathic hospital. The donor, among other things, was a partner in the Smith and Wesson gun factory in Springfield and had amassed a large fortune during and after the Civil War. The bed capacity of the hospital was at first only twenty, but in 1906 Mr. Wesson gave a new building as a memorial to his wife and the name was changed from Hampden Homœopathic Hospital to Wesson Memorial Hospital.

The same generous giver of the Wesson Memorial Hospital made possible a sanctuary for mothers, in 1908, when the Wesson Maternity Hospital was opened with a capacity of twenty-five beds. This has gradually increased, and while in 1918 it was recorded that the births in this hospital were more than one-fourth of all those recorded in the city, in 1934 the proportion was one out of every two. The prenatal clinic was created by the Visiting Nurse Association and later taken over by the hospital. This hospital, as well as the Wesson Memorial and Springfield hospitals, has a school of nursing.



SHRINE HOSPITAL, SPRINGFIELD

A unique and welcome addition to the hospital field came in 1925, when the Shrine Hospital was opened on Carew Street. This is supported by the Shriners of Springfield and houses a large group of crippled children whose parents are too poor to pay for the care and surgical attention they so vitally need to remedy their unfortunate physical defects. This public-spirited organization, through its various activities, collects the necessary money to maintain the hospital.

The plain, white, clap boarded First Church, which represents the oldest religious group in the city, has stood for one hundred and seven-

teen years on Court Square. It was built by Isaac Damon, who also built the old toll bridge, and was paid for by the sale of 15,000 shares at \$50 each. The exterior, with its graceful spire, remains practically the same as when erected, but the interior has seen some changes. A furnace was installed in 1826 and the comfort of cushions in the pews was added in 1862. Jenny Lind sang in the church when she visited Springfield, and in 1848 the body of John Quincy Adams, a friend of the pastor, Dr. Osgood, lay in state there for three days.

Eight churches call the First Church "Mother," four of which withdrew before 1819. It recognized the importance of religious instruction of children by organizing a Sunday school as early as 1818. The parish house was added to the church building in 1874. The rooster which surmounts the spire came from England and measures four feet above his claws. The figure is cast from bell metal and has a tiny cylinder sealed in the head, from one eye to the other, which contains a few brief historical items.

Trinity Church is called a community cathedral. It is Methodist Episcopal, but its buildings are at the service of the whole city. This group, in fourteenth century Gothic style, consists of Trinity Sanctuary, Grace Chapel, the Singing Tower and the Community House, which contains social halls, committee rooms, library, gymnasium, swimming pool, game rooms and little theatre. The building was made possible through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Horace A. Moses. There is a series of twenty-four fine windows, the most notable of which is one of Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh. The Trinity carillon in the Singing Tower is one of the largest carillons ever made by the famous bell founders, John Taylor and Company, of England, and consists of sixty-one bells.

Another notable church building in the city is the Church of the Unity, erected in 1869. It is of Longmeadow freestone and was designed by H. H. Richardson. An interesting item in its construction was the concealing of the chimney in its spire. The church has fourteen beautiful windows: Rebecca at the Well is by LaFarge, The Holy Family by Will H. Low, and The Light Bearer, in memory of Samuel Bowles, is by Edward Simmons. The other windows are for the most part by Louis Tiffany, or from the Tiffany studios. In 1884 Mrs. Chester W. Chapin gave \$10,000 for a parsonage, which later was used for a parish house.



One of the notable ministers of the Church of the Unity was the Reverend Augustus P. Reccord, who served the parish over fourteen years. He was interested in civic and welfare matters while in Springfield and took an important part in whatever was for the betterment of the city. St. Paul's Universalist Church was merged with the Church of the Unity and contributed a handsome rose window, which was placed in the north wall of the building.



TRINITY METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,  
In the Forest Park Section, Springfield

The Unitarian organization came before that of the Methodists, Baptists or Episcopalians, and their first church was built by Jonathan Dwight in 1819. This was of the plain, white clap boarded style, like its parent, the old First Church, and was later used as a furniture warehouse.

St. Michael's Cathedral parish is the oldest and largest Catholic parish in the city and originally embraced the territory of all the other parishes. The cathedral, dedicated in 1861, is a brick building with brownstone trimmings, the spire rising one hundred and ninety feet above the street. In a niche on the outside of the tower is a life-size statue of St. Michael, a spear in his hand and a dragon at his feet.

The windows are of stained glass and on those in the transepts are beautiful figures representing Biblical scenes.

The Church of the Sacred Heart at the corner of Chestnut and Linden streets is one of the grandest church edifices in New England, truly cathedral in its proportions. It will accommodate over two thousand people at one time. The parish was set off in 1873 to minister to the north part of the city, and in 1877 established the first parochial school in this region.

The South Congregational Church, which was organized on March 23, 1842, had but forty members at first, all but six of them from the old First Church. Their first location was on Bliss Street, but in 1874 the edifice at the corner of Maple and High streets was completed. It is of Longmeadow sandstone with an underpinning of Monson granite and trimmed with yellow Ohio stone. A decorative feature is the seven trefoil windows on one side under the handsome rose window. The substantial tower looms above a lower gable, set off by another gable, lower still.

Under the auspices of the South Church a paper called the "Wide Awake," filled with local news and items from the South Seas, was published for some time. The Reverend James Gordon Gilkey, present pastor, has a wide program of activities under his charge and is also a writer and lecturer of note.

The Episcopal Church group, now housed in Christ Church Cathedral, was not an offshoot of the old First Church, but started at the armory under the leadership of Colonel Roswell Lee, then commandant. It met at first in an upper room of the administration building.



SAINT MICHAEL'S CATHEDRAL,  
SPRINGFIELD

Colonel Lee asked the government for funds to build a chapel for the employees of the arsenal, who as workers for the United States Government could not be taxed for the support of the First Church. No chapel was furnished, but this upper room had a cupola and a bell and served until a serious fire took place. The church furniture was saved and for a time the old town hall was used as a place of worship. Twenty members organized the church in 1838 and erected their first building in 1840. A group of West Point cadets attended the Episcopal Church in July, 1821, and a second colorful visit of the cadets took place in 1922, just a little over a hundred years later.

Christ Church Cathedral is one of the famous Episcopal churches of New England, not only famous for its services, but for its art treasures as well—the memorial pulpit, the altar and reredos, the stained glass and some exquisite altar vestments. It became a cathedral through the efforts of the present bishop of the diocese, the Right Reverend Dr. Thomas F. Davies, who also is a writer of some note.

The most modern of Springfield's sixty churches is the First Church of Christ Scientist, on State Street, which was dedicated in 1922. It is an imposing structure of Indiana limestone with pillared front and classic lines that replaced a small wooden chapel on the same site. It was built on the pay-as-you-go policy and was completed without a debt. The basement was built in 1916 and used for services until funds sufficient to go on with were gathered. The pews in the spacious auditorium will seat 1,200 persons. It is carpeted in a rich blue and is soundproof. Quotations from the Bible and from the writings of Mary Baker Eddy are inscribed on the front walls. In addition, the Scientists maintain a public reading room on Vernon Street, which is open daily.

The first burying ground in Springfield was back of the old church at the foot of Elm Street, and it received the bodies of the early settlers for many years. But when the railroad was put through from Hartford to Springfield, in 1848, the ancient cemetery had to be abandoned. The training ground and the pound that used to be there had gone long before and for the cemetery there was provided another beautiful tract not far from the heart of the city. This was a property known as Martha's Dingle, a valley lying east of Maple Street, to which other pieces of land have been added from time to time, so that



now the Springfield Cemetery includes the greater part of the area between Maple, Central, Cedar, Pine, Union, and Mulberry streets.

On the ninth of May, 1841, there was organized in the city of Springfield the first mutual park cemetery ever incorporated under general laws. Dr. William B. O. Peabody, then pastor of the Church of the Unity, was a prime mover in this project and was elected president, an office which he held until the time of his death. To his enthusiasm and foresight the early establishment of the cemetery is largely due and it is often spoken of as the Peabody Cemetery. The bodies and old headstones were removed from the burying ground on the bank of the Connecticut and were for the most part placed in the Pine Street section.

This cemetery is the final resting place of many of Springfield's distinguished citizens. Among them are: Mary Holyoke, daughter of William Pynchon; John Mallifield, the town's first benefactor, Dr. William B. O. Peabody, Dr. Samuel Osgood, Dr. Josiah Gilbert Holland, Chester Harding, General James W. Ripley, William B. Calhoun, Chief Justice Reuben A. Chapman and many others. Here, too, are found some very interesting inscriptions on the old headstones, such as that of Susan Freedom, who died in 1803, aged nineteen: "Tho' short her life, and humble her station, she faithfully performed all the duties of it. The wise and great could do no more. A Colored Girl bro't up by Col. Worthington." Another is: "In Memory of Mr. Earl Cooley, who by a casual blow in a well," died in 1809. The stone which marks the grave of Henry Starkey's child, who was killed by a horse, has this verse:

"Blame not the beast that sent me to the dust,  
For the God of nature said he must."

Rough stone was brought from East Longmeadow, in 1856, and cut at the cemetery for the arch which spans the Maple Street entrance. Later a Norman chapel was given to the cemetery and the crematory was added to the building in 1910. The plant was brought up-to-date by the building of the new columbarium and office building in 1932.

The Cherry Lane Cemetery, because of the destruction of the old burial place on Columbus Avenue, is the oldest established cemetery in Springfield. It was used first by the Baptists in 1826 and occu-

pied the site of their parsonage and barn. Later they had a church at Maple and Mulberry streets, and their present place of worship is the Highland Church, but the cemetery remained where first started. In 1932 the old plot of land received a new lease of life and now is an attractive place with its barberry hedge and border of a continuous bed of plants. The tombstones lie flat on the ground and shield-shaped markers are placed on the graves of the Civil War veterans. The attractive service house, with its flagstone walk and Windsor chairs, contains the burial records for the city. The iron gates were



ENTRANCE TO SPRINGFIELD CEMETERY

a gift from the Daughters of the American Revolution, the flagpole was given by the Sons of the American Revolution, and the picket fence by the Girl Scouts.

Hillcrest Park is a comparatively new cemetery, which has a beautiful mausoleum set far back from the main road. Here there are vaults for the interment of the dead, and the park-like appearance is carried out in the use of flowers and shrubs instead of headstones to mark the graves.



The Young Women's Christian Association building is located on Howard Street and has now about 1,000 members. The residence offers a pleasant home to the young women employed in Springfield. They have kitchen and laundry privileges as well as social and recreational. The cafeteria service may be used by groups not living in residence. The industrial department furnishes club rooms and leadership and companionship for the working girl who wishes to join a group. Special classes are arranged for young married women, and the health education department offers its services to all. Over 7,000 young women are yearly using this fine institution on Howard Street.

The Girl Reserves are junior members of high school age organized through schools and churches. Programs are based on the interests of the girls and summer and winter conferences are an important feature.

Brookside Young Women's Camp at Chester, Massachusetts, offers a fine vacation for a small sum, and a chance to participate in a wholesome outdoor life. Swimming and water sports, golf and archery, hiking and camp cooking, music and dramatics, as well as many other interests, are featured.

The Springfield Boys' Club, located on Chestnut Street, serves mostly boys of grade school age and especially the underprivileged boy. Its winter program includes handicraft and recreation and is directed by a superintendent and a board of volunteer directors. It has a large camp at Brimfield, where over five hundred boys are given a good time each summer.



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*Libraries and Museums*

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## CHAPTER XXXII

### *Libraries and Museums*

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Little more than a stone's throw from the busy streets that mark the modern and commercial world of Springfield is another and totally different world.

The transition is almost startling. As the observer walks up lower State Street from Main, he sees all about him the ebb and flow of traffic, the moving crowds of people on the sidewalk, the stores with their merchandise attractively displayed in the windows; to his ears come the sounds of the city, the honking of horns and the shifting of gears, the occasional strident hawkings of newsboys, laughter and chatter. At the corner of Chestnut and State streets, as he turns off the roadway and up an inclined walk through a sloping lawn past the statue of St. Gaudens' "Puritan," the city is still about him, although fainter. When he finally passes the northwest corner of the library the city disappears and gives way to a new and entrancing vista.

A long, cool green lawn, like some precious Persian rug of old, meets his eyes. He sees, too, a quadrangle of buildings, almost breathtaking in their beauty, stately in their dignity, and yet warm and inviting. He senses a quiet calm, an unruffled serenity; that this place is a haven of peace from the outside world, a segment of the past in the midst of modernity.

It is here that is located the cultural core of Springfield. On the south side, facing State Street, is the City Library; directly opposite, on the quadrangle, is the William Pynchon Memorial Building, where is housed the fine collections of the Connecticut Valley Historical Society; on the east side is the George Walter Vincent Smith Gallery and the Museum of Natural History; and on the west is the Museum of Fine Arts. If it is true that people of culture who visit a place judge that place by its libraries and museums, then Springfield is indeed favored. For perhaps no other city the size of Springfield

in the entire country can give its residents better or fuller opportunities in this sphere.

The oldest institution on the quadrangle is a natural outgrowth of the public library movement in New England, which had its incep-

THE  
**MERITORIOUS PRICE**  
 OF  
**Our Redemption, Iustification, &c.**  
*Cleering it from some common Errors;*  
 And proving,

1. That Christ did not suffer for us those unutterable torments of Gods wrath, that commonly are called Hell-torments, to redeem our soules from them.

2. That Christ did not bear our sins by Gods imputation, and therefore he did not bear the curse of the Law for them.

3. That Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law (not by suffering the said curse for us, but) by a satisfactory price of attonement; viz. by paying or performing unto his Father that invaluable precious thing of his Mediatoriall obedience, wherof his Mediatoriall Sacrifice of attonement was the matter-piece.

4. A sinners righteousness or justification is explained, and cleered from some common Errors.

By *William Pinchin*, Gentleman, in New-England.

The Mediator saith thus to his Father in *Psal 40.8, 10.*  
*I delight to do thy will O my God, jea thy Law is within my heart: (viz.) I delight to do thy will, or Law, as a Mediator.*  
*I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart, I have declared thy faithfulness, and thy salvation: Namely, I have not hid thy righteousness, or thy way of making sinners righteous, but have declared it by the performance of my Mediatoriall Sacrifice of attonement, as the procuring cause of thy attonement, to the great Congregation for their everlasting righteousness.*

L O N D O N ,  
 Printed by J. M. for George Whittington, and James Moxon, and are to be sold at the blue Anchor in Corn-hill near the Royall Exchange. 1650.

tion at the middle of the nineteenth century. The earliest library in Springfield was instituted some time before 1796, and was a subscription affair, called the Springfield Library Company. There were about three hundred and twenty volumes in the collection and they were ponderous tomes, consisting mostly of theological works and a few



novels. It was not difficult to be an ardent library goer in those days, since the library was open only once a month, and then for only three hours. The librarian must have needed a head for figures, as a borrower could take out at the same time two folios, or three quartos, or three octavos, or two octavos and three duodecimos, or one octavo and four duodecimos, or six duodecimos.

Fines were assessed on a different basis, too. The time element was not so important and the librarian was rather lenient about whether the book was kept out another month or not. A borrower paid his fine for spilling candle grease on the pages, and the amount of the fine depended on how many leaves of the book had been penetrated by the spot!

Other small subscription libraries sprang up with the passage of years. The Franklin Library Association was formed by workmen at the armory. The Hampden Mechanics' Association, organized in 1824, later merged with the Young Men's Institute. These libraries were vastly different from those to which we are accustomed. Their patronage was limited to small, select groups, and their stock of literature decidedly limited.

In 1855, as the library movement gained more impetus, a petition was presented to the Springfield City Council asking an appropriation of \$2,000 for the establishing of a city library. That the city was becoming acutely aware of the need for a cultural center is indicated when out of 13,000 inhabitants at that time 1,200 people signed the petition, which was not at first successful. Two years later, with the weight of added public demand, the City Library Association was founded to "establish and maintain a public library in the city of Springfield accessible to all persons." The two words "all persons" indicate the changing trend of thought from the old idea of "privileges for the few."

A natural period of organization followed and the various collections about the city, including those of the Springfield Institute, the Young Men's Literary Association and the Hampden Agricultural Library were merged and placed in what was then the new city hall. Subscriptions to amount to about \$8,000 were asked, and the women of the city held a fair and added about \$1,800 more to the fund.

One of the most outstanding personalities in the history of the City Library Association was the Reverend Dr. William Rice. In 1861

he returned to Springfield from other parts, broken in health, and fully resolved to end his days here. He became librarian, and from then on served thirty-six years in that position. The growth of the library was due in great measure to his almost fanatical zeal on its behalf.

A story concerning Dr. Rice has become a standing legend. Whenever a notable and prominent citizen died, Dr. Rice would escort the grief-stricken widow to the cemetery, and in the capacity of his added office of clergyman, would offer spiritual comfort. On the slow and sad return from the cemetery, in his capacity as librarian, he would eulogize the good qualities and sterling traits of the dead man, and gently express the need of a suitable memorial which would take the form of an endowment for the impoverished and yet infinitely deserving City Library!

The first of these endowments, whether through Dr. Rice's adroit persuasion or not, was \$5,000 in bonds from Mary Bryant, in memory of her father, John Bryant. Unfortunately there was a period of financial depression, and the bonds proved worthless. The donor was a conscientious woman and sent an additional sum for other bonds, which are good to this day.

This marked the beginning of many gifts and bequests. Probably many libraries have had larger individual endowments, but few have enjoyed the benefit of so numerous gifts. Of the forty endowments received, many came from people of only modest wealth. A case in point is that of Charles Emery, an armorer at the arsenal, who left most of his life savings amounting to \$13,000 to the library.

Among his many other talents, Dr. Rice had an uncanny skill in selecting books. At the time of his death, in 1897, he had gathered together a large and valuable collection of 100,000 volumes, with little literary deadwood among them.

No one showed a truer interest in the progress of the City Library than George Bliss, who served as a director from the beginning of the association until his death in 1873. Although a busy man of widely varied interests, he never failed to be present at the yearly meeting, even when later his health failed and he almost had to be carried into the chambers. In 1864 he presented the "Hatch Lot" on State Street as a site for a library, and in addition contributed \$10,000 from his own resources as the first subscriber. Seven years later a library



building, on the Gothic style of architecture, was completed at a cost of \$100,000, and was one of the best to be found in a city the size of Springfield.

The man who raised the bulk of the subscriptions for this building was John L. King, president of the association at that time, and generally credited with being the "father" of the City Library. Mr. King gave generously out of his own pocket, and devoted practically every minute of his time toward appealing for money from others. It is said that King's pockets were stuffed with the subscription papers during the daytime, and that he slept with them under his pillow at night.

A library, like any other institution, changes with the times, and credit must go to John Cotton Dana for recognizing this fact and applying modern methods to the library of Springfield. Mr. Dana succeeded Dr. Rice as librarian after the latter's death, and although he served but a short four-year term, he accomplished far-reaching and significant changes in the library organization. A firm believer in the value of publicity, he stimulated community interest in the library to the utmost, so that the people of Springfield began to establish the reading habit much more seriously than before. He organized a training school to prepare young women for library work, and gathered a collection of inexpensive pictures classified by subjects for general circulation. The fruits of his efforts may now be seen in the fact that the City Library has about a half million of these prints and over 175,000 are borrowed annually.

Perhaps the most outstanding change instituted by Mr. Dana was the "open shelf" system, or the placing of books on shelves where the reader could have easy access to them. Although this sounds only commonplace now, it was a radical step in those days. The books were kept out of sight, and under lock and key, and much time and energy was consumed when the reader had to ask the librarian for a book, and the librarian, after ascertaining whether the book was available, had to make a trip to the rear, unlock the case, and procure it for the reader.

There are various highlights which have occurred from time to time under the public library system that are more or less amusing or unusual. One man took out eighty-eight books at once, to keep six months for heavy literary work! The story goes the rounds, too, that

a woman with a mind toward finance drew numerous novels at one cent a day from the Springfield library and rented them to her friends at two cents a day, and further, it is said that she made rather a nice profit before the story leaked out!

By 1909, the City Library was becoming totally inadequate for the demands it was subjected to. As a natural outcome, and under the leadership of Nathan D. Bill, president of the association, branch libraries were opened at Forest Park and Indian Orchard, and five



SPRINGFIELD CITY LIBRARY

years later another branch at Memorial Square, which was made possible by a donation of \$60,000 from Andrew Carnegie, in addition to gifts by Springfield citizens. Later the residents of Forest Park, feeling that their library was becoming inadequate, raised among the people of their own neighborhood \$45,000 to build an addition.

The present City Library building was erected in 1912 at a cost of \$350,000, of which \$200,000 was contributed by Andrew Carnegie and the rest by a large number of residents, including many school children, who donated their pennies to the cause. The library interior is split up into various sections; Rice Hall, which is the reference

room, the periodical room, the art room, the children's room, and others. The various museums, which all come under the City Library Association, are completely endowed privately, but the library itself is maintained by the city, supplemented by moderate endowments from private sources.

The production of literature in Springfield really began with the Springfield "Republican," long the most famous product of the town. The first of Springfield's essentially literary figures was Josiah Gilbert Holland, who was born in Belchertown, but here entered on his career as a moralist, novelist and poet. His local historical romance of the Puritan day, "The Bay Path," was written here, as was the idyll of Kathrina by the "winding and willow-fringed Connecticut," and it was for the "Republican" that he wrote his "History of Western Massachusetts." In Dr. Holland's later career he became editor of "Scribner's Monthly," and he added several novels to his list of fiction. "Sevenoaks" is the public's favorite among his books, and in all his writings Springfield may take a just share of pride.

George Spring Merriam, who was born in Springfield, was an author of rare and beautiful gifts, both literary and spiritual. In his "Life and Times of Samuel Bowles" he is said to have produced one of the few absolutely truthful personal biographies linked to the story of the Nation. One of his books was the story of slavery in America, an admirable survey of the striking moral advance of the Nation.

On the death of Noah Webster, G. and C. Merriam became the publishers of "Webster's Dictionary," a Connecticut Valley product. The first edition appeared in 1828 and had been twenty years in preparation. The latest edition of "Webster's New International Dictionary" was published in 1934, after ten years of hard work by a corps of two hundred and fifty editorial workers. It has over 600,000 entries and 122,000 words not found in any other dictionary.

Another author was Mason A. Green, who compiled an unusually valuable history of Springfield in connection with its two hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebration in 1886. Other historians connected with Springfield are Alfred M. Copeland, George Bancroft, and Charles Henry Barrows. Among the well-known literary preachers was Washington Gladden, who wrote some of his books while a pastor in Springfield. He also edited a magazine called "Sunday Afternoon" and wrote many fine hymns. Charles Goodrich Whiting, for a time



literary editor of the "Springfield Republican," has produced a number of nature books, among which were "The Saunterer" and "Walks in New England," which were especially popular.

Palmer Cox, an artist-writer for children, taught them moral lessons quite happily through his "Brownies," which are a great contrast to the present barbarous comic strip. Thornton Burgess is well known by children of the present time for his bedtime stories of "Old Mother West Wind" and for his nature work.

The county's most famous writer of dog stories, Albert Payson Terhune, was a resident of Springfield while his father was pastor of the First Church between 1879 and 1884. The author has traveled extensively, was for a time a reporter on the New York "Evening World," and had a reputation as an amateur boxer. His mother was a writer of magazine articles and novels under her pen name of Marion Harland and her famous cook book is still to be found in many homes.

Brewer Corcoran is well known for his Boy Scout stories and Charles Clark Munn for his novels. Franklin B. Sanborn, once on the staff of the "Springfield Republican," was author of the lives of Thoreau, John Brown, Alcott and Emerson. Harry A. Franck, inveterate traveller and lecturer, for a few years head of a language department in one of Springfield's high schools, is author of many "Vagabond Journeys."

Springfield has been rather fortunate musically in its position half way between New York and Boston, not near enough to either to be reduced to servile subordination, and yet convenient enough to both to make it easy and natural for good attractions to visit the city. In the number and quality of the operas, symphony concerts, recitals and miscellaneous musical entertainments that are offered, it is to be rated among the more favored of the smaller American communities, and these advantages are an appreciable factor in its attractiveness as a place of residence. It is the natural musical center of western Massachusetts, and the spread of a network of good roads has in recent years greatly extended the population upon which it draws for the more important events, both musical and dramatic. On the other hand the music lovers of Springfield can considerably increase their opportunities by easy trips to Northampton or Hartford, in both of which cities first rate concerts are to be heard. The musical life is

what might be expected of a predominantly American community, not exposed to any special influences, but favorably situated and intelligent and appreciative enough to take advantage of its opportunities. Like other communities in which the Puritan strain prevails, it has approached music from the side of religion and of general culture rather than from the side of æsthetics or of instinctive craving. The standards have been kept high for the reason that even those who are not by nature musical are intelligent enough to appreciate the difference between the best and the second best, and to sustain the best as an invaluable instrument of culture.

The two great facts in the musical history of Springfield, the things that have rather distinguished it among the cities of its class, are the Orpheus Club and the Music Festival. These have served both to stimulate local interest and make sure of opportunities for hearing the best artists in the country, thus setting from the very beginning a high standard of technical skill. The Orpheus Club was founded in 1873 as a men's chorus, its first leader being a talented Dutch violinist of a noted musical family, who had come to Boston as a young man and, after playing for a time in orchestras, had settled in Springfield as a teacher.

Still another outstanding feature of Springfield's present-day musical life is its fine carillon in the campanile of the municipal group. Ernest Newton Bagg, official chime ringer, has his office two hundred and twenty-one feet above the pavements. Here on the twelve bells, the largest of which weighs 13,000 pounds, he plays regularly or rings out special programs for holidays or visiting conventions.

In 1897, the illustrious Scotchman, Andrew Carnegie, came to Springfield for a short stay. His fellow-Scotchmen entertained him royally. Every minute of the great man's time had been planned far in advance. Like other visiting dignitaries, he was taken around the city and shown the sights by the proud Springfield citizens. In the course of the tour he was finally taken to see the Smith collection in the art museum. As he entered the galleries those with him were quick to see that the casual and politely attentive expression on his face had changed to one of keen, flashing interest.

"But gentlemen," asked Carnegie, "why didn't you bring me here first? This is what I wanted to see most of all." The time for luncheon drew near, and his hungry escorts notified him of the fact.



"Never mind luncheon," he said. "I will eat on the train." Again he turned to his rapt study.

The time came for his train to leave, and his escorts, glancing nervously at their watches, notified him that he would have to hurry to catch it. Carnegie's reply was simple. "I'll catch the next train," he said.

It was not long after his return to Pittsburgh that George Walter Vincent Smith, the owner of the art collection was astonished and delighted to receive a beautiful bronze cast of a man sitting on a rock and known as "Hermes Resting." This Hermes was a replica of the one in the Carnegie Museum at Pittsburgh after the original one which was found at Herculaneum. Today that figure, a tribute of one lover of art to another, stands facing the entrance to the long southern gallery on the second floor of the art museum, for all to see and admire.

An art critic of distinction has said of Springfield, "there is probably no city of its rank in this country so distinguished for its appreciation of art, yet its own production in painting and sculpture is not large. Nevertheless, the city that has given a home to such art collections as those of George Walter Vincent Smith has no rival."

As a young man still in his teens, Mr. Smith was a lover of beauty, and every dollar he could lay his hands on was invested in works of art. His early business connection with a prominent importing house gave him opportunities to pick up art treasures which later became the nucleus of his collection. As able a business man as he was a collector, he prospered, and at thirty-five retired from business, free to devote his life to study and travel and to the pleasant task of collecting rare and beautiful objects of all periods. The Smith collection contains a wide and varied selection of Oriental rugs and European furniture, ceramics from China and Japan, American paintings, arms, armor and statues from the Philippines and, in fact, almost all the various types to be found in the corners of the world, far and near.

Mr. Smith married a Springfield girl, Belle Townsley, whose father was a prominent business man. Upon the death of Mr. Townsley, it became necessary that someone manage his extensive real estate holdings in this vicinity, and the task fell into the collector's capable hands. In 1871 he decided to make his home here, and part of his collection was brought to the city, the rest following later. His

wife was also an ardent collector, especially of wonderful laces and embroideries, and fine needlework of all descriptions.

The first art exhibition of any significance in Springfield occurred in 1878, through the interest stimulated by Mr. Smith. At that exhibit he showed fifty-six pictures, and out of these only twenty remained unsold. Through his instigation these art exhibits became an annual feature in the cultural life of Springfield. In 1882 he went abroad to add to his collection, and while in Italy, was successful in obtaining a famous fragment of a painting by Titian, all that survived the fire which consumed the church wherein it rested. Mr. Smith considered this his most valued possession, although there were many others which delighted him almost as much.

There are cloisonné enamels of almost unbelievable beauty to the true lover of art. To name a few outstanding pieces, there is a Chinese incense burner, or Koro, of superb texture, resting on the back of three white birds whose graceful necks are all turned in the same direction; a garden seat dating back to the Ming dynasty, in the late fourteenth century, barrel-shaped and studded with brass rings and nubs; groups of Chinese porcelains of rare delicacy; powder blue vases and black-mirrored marriage cases. For lovers of jade, the museum is a paradise, as well as for those who lean toward Chinese teakwood and mahogany. Visiting Orientals, well versed in art, have said that the Smith collection is equal to anything they have seen in their native land, even in the finest collections.

Each piece is a "museum piece," the best of its kind. There are rich rugs and carpets from Turkey and other parts of Asia Minor. The fineness of the rugs may be seen in that 1,510,425 knots were tied by some Persian master in one of the silk prayer rugs of the collection, and some of the Sehna's are so fine in weave that they contain four hundred knots to the square inch.

In 1895, during the term in which James Rumrill served as president of the art museum, the present building on the quadrangle was built to house the magnificent collection, and to provide room for the constant additions which Mr. Smith was making. This building, of polished Pompeian brown brick, was at that time perhaps the finest building of its type in the entire country, and today is still in the front ranks of art museums. In 1914 Mr. and Mrs. Smith formally

gave their combined collections to the art museum, with an endowment fund. Later a wing was added to the main building.

In the privacy of a few old houses there are noteworthy portraits of past generations of much fame in their day; for example: one of Chester Harding's most striking portraits of Daniel Webster long hung in Highland Place and later was the property of the Algonquin Club of Boston. Mr. Harding made his home in the town from 1830 to his death in 1866, when he was nearly seventy-four years old and full of honors. He belonged in the Connecticut Valley, for he was grandson of a Deerfield farmer on his father's side and of a Whately farmer on his mother's, while he himself was born in the adjoining town of Conway. He had a youth of minor adventuring in peddling, and scrambled into portrait painting through sign painting, with little education of any sort and none in art. Yet he became the vogue in Boston to such a degree that he had a long waiting list, and he was a notable success in Great Britain, not only on one visit, but on several, painting royal highnesses and others of high degree. Mr. Harding's "Egotistigraphy," which he wrote for his family, and which was published with further notes by his daughter, is a record of a noteworthy man. His personal appearance was remarkable, for he was six feet three inches in height and nobly proportioned.

Will Bradley, a really brilliant designer of imaginative art, lived for a time in Springfield and later received fabulous prices for his decorative art, which never failed in surprises.

The Museum of Natural History was organized in 1859, which makes it one of the earliest in the country. Daniel L. Harris, who had returned from Europe with a collection of curios, determined to found a museum of this type, and he had the enthusiastic support of other men, John King, George Otis, Jr., and Reuben Chapman. In a year they had gathered in the old city hall a good representation of Indian relics and about 6,000 natural history specimens. As time went on other interested people made their contributions, both in specimens and in money, so that the "Ethnological and Natural History Museum," as it was called, warranted expansion. In 1899 the first separate museum of Natural History was erected with money donated by over a hundred citizens. The increased activities made it necessary to enlarge the museum in 1934. This was accomplished largely from the Stephen E. Seymour fund at a cost of over \$125,000.



Now the visitor can see enough in the ten galleries to interest him for hours. There is a modern aquarium of sizeable proportions, with its fine collection of native fishes; a number of astronomy alcoves and the Seymour planetarium, which is to be equipped with a modern projector; many natural history groups and habitat groups with background paintings of great beauty. It is pleasing to note that although there is an infinite number of exhibits to show the public, the museum has a definite policy of emphasizing local natural history—the history of Hampden County and the Connecticut Valley.

The group called "The Indian Workshop" represents a scene where Indians of this region are cutting chunks of rock from steatite or soapstone boulders. These chunks were later hollowed out into bowls, which were used for grinding food or to carry liquids. The location of this workshop was a pasture in North Wilbraham, from which the entire boulder was transported to the museum and placed in a separate section of its own. 1127395

On it are marks where the Indians had started to chip out more chunks. In the soil nearby were found implements and pieces of stone bowls broken in the process of making them. Through the pasture are scattered pits and steatite fragments in the bottom, to show that several of the boulders had been completely worked up. These boulders were left there by the melting glacier that centuries ago covered much of the eastern part of North America. To obtain tools to work on the boulders the Indians paddled down the Chicopee River and obtained the naturally hard, sharp-edged trap rock at the Mount Tom and Mount Holyoke ranges. The life-like figures in the Indian workshop group were reconstructed from skeletal remains found near the fork of the Connecticut and the Chicopee rivers.

The museum, great as is its cultural contribution to Springfield, is not maintained by the city financially. Like all the other museums in the group, it exists through the generosity of public-spirited donors. Aside from its natural value, it sponsors other programs under its director, Grace P. Johnson. Among these are free lectures and special exhibits, classes for nature study, including modeling, story hours and contests for children, and a general systematic coöperation with the public schools.

The William Pynchon Memorial Building, at the north end of the museum lawn, houses relics from every period of the city's growth



which have been accumulated by the Connecticut Valley Historical Society. Completed in 1927, it is a lasting tribute to the founder of Springfield.

The museum is a two-story colonial building with an "L" at the rear. The doorway, adapted from that of the old Samuel Porter house in Hadley, is the outstanding feature of the exterior. Its exquisite design represents some of the best decorative detail of the period. The top is of the curved, broken-pediment style, while in the pediment itself is a pedestal topped by a carved pineapple, a feature taken from the old pineapple doorway in Salem. The fan-shaped windows in the gable ends of the building, and the arched rear porch with its door were copied from the Chapin house.

The Pynchon Building has none of the formality or monumental coldness sometimes associated with museums. Its charm lies in its atmosphere of an old New England home. As the visitor stands in the wide hallway, everything about him combines to give this impression. On either side doors open into rooms which might have been lived in two or three hundred years ago, faithful as to furnishings and appointments down to the last detail. The door latches and the hinges are reproduced from early days, and the nails in the floors themselves have been cleverly made to look like hand-wrought iron. Clean white woodwork, decorative paneling, and bright panorama wallpaper add to the effect. A graceful staircase leads up to an old door on the landing. The wallpaper represented here is a copy of "Scenic America" which was painted by F. Zipelius and Eugene Ehraman, of Mulhouse, in 1834.

Shading off into a blue sky, the wallpaper blends into the upper hall color scheme of light blue-grey, on which are shown scenes of Niagara Falls, New York Harbor, Boston Harbor, West Point, the Natural Bridge of Virginia and the Winnebago Indians.

The east room downstairs is the dining room, patterned after a McIntire design of an old Salem house. The wallpaper is a hand-blocked pattern, taken from the Ropes house at Salem. Valuable pieces of pink luster, blue canton and willow ware line the ancient shelves of the corner cupboards, and on top are delicately-tinted carved shells. A heavy mahogany table is in the center of the room, and four Hitchcock chairs. A Sheraton buffet as well as a drop-leaf mahogany table stand against the wall. The fireplace, dated about

1750, contains a foot stove and a small grill, and over it hangs a convex mirror with gilded frame. Pewter mugs and miscellaneous glassware add charming touches.

At the rear of the first floor is an early colonial kitchen with its huge old fireplace and crude iron or pewter utensils. This unique room and its furnishings were the gift of Brewer Corcoran.

The iron balcony hanging on the north wall of the curator's office was taken from Uncle Jerry Warriner's house on Howard Street, where Jenny Lind stood as she sang to the children of Springfield.

In the upper hall there is furniture from the old Pelatiah Glover home, and also a Saint Gaudens' bust of Chester W. Chapin. From this hall open two front chambers called the Chapin rooms. The west chamber has a wainscoting, plastered and painted walls, and sliding window shutters. The furniture is principally Chapin furniture. The Chapin desk itself is two hundred years old, and there is also Chester W. Chapin's wooden cradle, and his grandmother's portrait. There is the old Pynchon armchair as well as an unusual four-poster bed from the Hayes-Swazey collection. The floor boards of the room are taken from the old Dwight house on Howard Street, and covered with a hand-woven carpet on which there are small hooked rugs. The main feature of the east chamber is the spatter work painted floor, which is partially covered with braided rugs.

The Memorial Building has a real, old-fashioned attic, reached by a closed staircase. The windows were from the old Ely tavern on Dwight Street, and the beams and doors from Monson. There is a spinning wheel, flax wheel and loom set up ready for use, a cobbler's bench and an ancient cheese press.

The west wing holds a lecture hall, where the dedication services for the building were held. The east wing bears the name of Solomon Griffin Memorial Hall in honor of the man who gave his best services for many years as a director and an officer of the society. Collections from the Springfield room at the library have been placed here, and built-in cases protect books and maps from deteriorating because of exposure to the air. Of particular interest among special exhibits is the original deed of William Pynchon, dated 1652, and another document which dates back to 1525. In the cases are various types of old glassware and china, and on the wall hangs a picture of the

old fort built in 1660. Another feature is the library and reference shelves, where material on the history of Springfield may be found.

The most recent among the splendid buildings comprising the museum group is the Museum of Fine Arts. Dedicated in 1933, this modern building stands on the west side of the quadrangle. The building itself has a stately simplicity.

The galleries are arranged so that they open into each other. The outer ring of galleries goes around the perimeter, but there is also an inner ring from which any of the outer galleries can be reached with ease. The levels are modulated into an ascending series so that a visitor standing on the threshold can see almost the entire depth of the museum, and there is no uncomfortable sense of being imprisoned in a small close space.

The museum has a thoroughly up-to-date air-conditioning system which sprays the incoming air with water and cools it. The lighting is bright and the dark marble used for the great arch near the landing by contrast brings out the brilliant hall, framing the objects exhibited. A variety of marbles, American, French, Italian and Belgian, make up the halls, while the exterior of the building is of Indiana limestone with Deer Island granite as the base.

It was through a large grant of money by James Philip Gray that the purchasing of fine paintings was made possible, and an additional gift by Mrs. Gray provided for the building. The museum is also building up a collection of fine prints to supplement the Wallace etchings and the Bidwell loan collection of Japanese prints.

The policies of this splendid museum are modern throughout. Where the old type of art museum had only its exhibits and nothing more, the Springfield institution sponsors numerous activities such as educational classes and lectures, and of late has presented old and rare cinemas.

The museum recently held a unique exhibit of early furniture, made by noted Springfield craftsmen of long ago, as well as master workmen from other towns nearby. This exhibit, of very decided local interest, included chairs, tables, desks, and mirrors, created by such men as Jacob Morse, the master clockmaker of Westfield; Calvin Bedurtha, of Agawam; Jacob Sargeant, William Lloyd, Moses Beach and numerous others from Springfield. The furniture represented ranged through those periods most treasured by collectors.



Each craftsman had his own shop, and each piece he made was a labor of love, the work of joining, carving and finishing being done entirely by himself. These rare specimens of the cabinetmaker's art which were exhibited not only represented Springfield and Hampden County, but were representative of early furniture throughout the colonies.

The museum housed in Building 19 of the United States Armory group probably contains as fine and complete a collection of small arms as can be found anywhere in the country. Longfellow visited Springfield in 1843, and the inspiration for his famous arsenal poem came from one of these buildings.

The "Life of Longfellow," edited by Samuel Longfellow, says: "His wife pleased her husband by remarking: 'How like an organ looked the ranged and shining gun barrels which covered the walls from floor to ceiling,'" and suggested how death would bring mournful music from them. An exhibition feature since arranged in the museum is known as the "Organ," where rifles are so placed as to look like the shining pipes of that instrument. The museum contains, too, the only complete collection of firearms made at the arsenals in Springfield, Harper's Ferry and Rock Island, as well as every make of rifle used by the United States in the World War.

The museum occupies the second and third floor of the building adjoining the administration building, and also contains rare and antique specimens of arms and armor from other parts of the world. Perhaps the center of interest in the entire place is a rare rifle carried by a Union soldier during the Civil War. Just as he fired it, in the midst of a hot battle, a Confederate bullet entered the muzzle. The bullets never met, however, the gases compressing between them and causing some of the barrel to be blown out.

A great part of this rich collection of arms was damaged by a fire which swept the museum in 1931. The fire, which started at a workbench located on the second floor, was discovered by a watchman late in the evening, and although he immediately gave the alarm, measures were taken too late to save a number of the specimens.





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*From the World War to the Tercentenary*

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## CHAPTER XXXIII

### *From the World War to the Tercentenary*

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With the entry of America into the World War, Springfield started on a feverish two years of intense activity. When the bulletin boards of the newspapers announced that at last America had joined the Allies in the fight against Germany, many young men enlisted immediately, and later others were drafted to swell the total of Springfield's soldier contribution, which in the form of the 104th Regiment performed valiant service in France. The day when these boys in khaki marched down Main Street and away was one never to be forgotten.

The United States Armory on Main Street was a great beehive of activity as workers toiled day and night to turn out arms and munitions. Its grounds teemed with guards, alert against any possibility of bombing by enemy spies, and ready with a stern challenge to the stranger who approached the gates. Industries throughout the city boomed day and night, and every available man and many women went to work at the machines to turn out the products necessary for conducting a great war. The people of Springfield endured the hardships at home with great courage, as the boys in the army abroad endured theirs. There were meatless days, sugarless days and butterless days, and sometimes heatless days, to conserve the resources of a country at war. Even children in primary schools contributed their pennies to the common cause. Financially, the city far exceeded its quota of Liberty Bonds, investing thousands of dollars in this manner, and the war chest quota was also topped by a goodly margin.

There were other factors which made the period even more difficult. One was the influenza epidemic which spread like wildfire through the city and took its toll of the residents. In the winter of 1918 a coal shortage came, and many houses went without heat in as trying a winter as the city ever had. The schools were forced to close



for several weeks because of this shortage of fuel. But the hard winter passed into warm weather, and with the advent of summer, news came from the front that the Allied troops were slowly pushing the Germans back, and that the end of the war seemed to be in sight. The 104th, of Springfield, was taking an important part and each day anxious relatives stood in front of the bulletin boards or scanned the newspapers for news of fatalities. On November 11, 1918, came the signing of the Armistice and Springfield was the scene of a wild celebration, as was every city in America. The celebration was even wilder later when the men in khaki came marching home, the ranks thinned, but glad in the knowledge that the war was over.

Springfield may well be proud of the showing the 104th Regiment made in France during the World War. In the battles of April 10, 12 and 13 of 1918, this regiment, subject to violent bombardments and attacked by heavy German forces, checked a dangerous advance and retook at the point of the bayonet several important and strategic positions.

The 104th was the first American regiment ever to be decorated by a foreign army. The ceremony took place on the Boucq plateau, only a short distance from the battle-torn front, and as the music of the "Star Spangled Banner" and the "Marseillaise" rose into the air, it was mingled with the dull rumble of heavy guns. A line of one hundred and eighteen men led by Colonel George H. Shelton, then commandant of the regiment, stood at attention as the French Army's representative, General Passaga, affixed the famous Croix de Guerre to the lowered colors of the regiment. The French general then decorated each man with the French War Cross for bravery in action.

Two years before, the old 2d Massachusetts Infantry had given promise of what it would do later. Encamped in New Mexico and acting as "Blackjack" Pershing's guard over his base of supplies and also as his communication unit, the regiment received much favorable comment from regular army officers who had been doubtful of guardsmen's value as soldiers. General Charles S. Farnsworth, then a colonel and Pershing's base commander at Columbus, New Mexico, stated that he had been agreeably surprised at the excellence of the regiment in aiding Pershing's long reach into Mexico. In October, 1916, the regiment returned to Massachusetts and paraded before the Governor and other Springfield State officials, and General Pershing himself wrote a letter of commendation.

In March of 1917, the old 2d Massachusetts Regiment was again called out to the number of 2,005, an increase of almost five hundred over the quota of the border days. After four months of railway guard duty covering several hundred miles of track from Fitchburg to the State line, the regiment finally mobilized in Westfield to go overseas as the 104th Massachusetts Regiment. Though different battalions set sail from different points, a majority of the unit were in the same convoy of ships leaving Halifax, September 28, 1917.

A month passed in the transports, in English camps, and in the well-known "hommes 40 chevaux 8" before the regiment was once more together. A reorganization and training period at Neufchateau followed, and finally the 104th entered the front. From then on it showed great bravery and efficiency at Chemin-des-Dames, in the Toul sector, at Chateau-Thierry and in the Argonne. The 104th, which had left Springfield under the command of Colonel Hayes, saw much of its action under other leadership, as Colonel Hayes was later transferred.

There was a great deal of shifting around of parts of the 104th, and many of the men fought in different sectors. James A. Rivers was a Springfield officer who distinguished himself with the 104th. He received his first baptism of fire with British and Canadian troops, was later wounded at Belleau Wood, and then commissioned a captain the day before the St. Mihiel drive. Captain Rivers was one of the sixty officers chosen to eat Christmas dinner with President Wilson and General Pershing at Montigny-le-Roi on Christmas Day of 1918.

Another member of the 104th who distinguished himself was Dr. W. A. R. Chapin, today a well-known Springfield physician. Dr. Chapin was commissioned a first lieutenant in the medical corps and sailed for England, first serving with the British 12th Infantry Regiment, composed of the remnants of one of Kitchener's famous original five divisions. Dr. Chapin was wounded twice and decorated with the British Military Cross for gallantry under fire. The list of the valiant is long in the 104th and many were killed or died of their wounds. The regiment returned to the United States in April of 1919, their ranks having been thinned by almost eight hundred men.

There was in 1919 an inevitable reaction to the feverish industrial activity of the war. This was felt particularly at the armory, where hundreds of skilled workmen were thrown out of employment. Some

of the skilled men found work when the Rolls-Royce Company, makers of the "finest cars in the world," began American production in East Springfield, near the Westinghouse. This plant turned out very few cars in comparison with those produced by the standard and cheaper makes, but each car was a work of mechanical art in itself.

The community chest was started at this time, a city-wide charity to which practically every resident, no matter how humble his means, manages to give something for the worthy charitable purposes it sponsors. The Federal Land Bank was organized specifically for the benefit of the farmer in his agricultural pursuits and opened a fine modern building on the corner of Byers and Chestnut streets seven years later to take care of its expanding business.

At this time the city suffered a housing shortage, always a sign of increased prosperity and growth. The assessed valuation of real property reached the staggering figure of something over \$200,000,000. The population was about 130,000, over four times that of fifty years before. The Westinghouse radio station WBZ, later WBZA, went on the air for the first time as radio developed with incredible rapidity and this station was one of the early ones in America. Some years later another Springfield radio station, WMAS, began to broadcast from the new Stonehaven Hotel on Chestnut Street. The North End Bridge was demolished by fire in 1923, to be replaced by a new and beautiful structure a few years later. An index of manufacturing activity in Springfield in the year 1924 may be seen when Springfield manufactures were valued at \$106,000,000.

In 1922 Springfield Airport was developed from Fisk Park, a baseball and athletic field owned by the Fisk Rubber Company. This field has been greatly enlarged and prepared for airport use by the four Tait brothers. There are now located at the field a modern hangar, an aircraft factory, and an administration building with radio connections. The field itself is lighted with the most approved type of boundary lights, flood lights and aircraft beacons. Airplane flights over the city can be arranged for at any time.

The opening of the Bowles Airport in Agawam in 1930 indicated that Springfield was already air-minded in a serious way. The enthusiasm in the city was great in 1931, when Lowell Bayles, speed flyer, put Springfield on the air racing map by winning the Thompson trophy speed dashes in a locally built Gee Bee, at the national air



aces, and a year later Major Jimmy Doolittle, of national air race fame, shattered the world's speed record for land planes in a Springfield Gee Bee. Bayles later crashed to death in an attempt to capture the world's record for speed planes. Another unfortunate air death occurred a few years later when Zantford D. Granville, Springfield builder of speed planes, was killed in an air crash. Maude Tait Moriarity has also held several women's air records for Springfield.

In 1924 came the bitter fight in the city between the jitneys and the trolley systems for transportation control. There was much litigation and dispute, but the trolley company was more powerful and slowly forced the jitneys out. The jitneys, in fighting back, reduced their fares by half, and finally ran with no fares at all, allowing the passengers to contribute what they would for their ride. The result of the fight was the banning of the jitneys from the Springfield streets.

An extraordinary increase in the assessed property valuation figures may be seen in 1926, when in that year the valuation quoted was \$303,350,000, or about a \$100,000,000 rise in only eight years. This one comparison is perhaps the best illustration of how Springfield grew with almost marvelous rapidity, spreading out as fast as roads could be paved and sidewalks laid. The Forest Park section, in particular, underwent great development, and homes went up one after another past the Diamond Match factory on Sumner Avenue and clear out to Allen Street, with small forests and areas of brush being cleared away to make room for new developments.

The old post-office building at Main and Worthington, where the postal service for many years was conducted, along with a customs house service, was finally torn down in 1933 and replaced by a beautiful and modern building on Dwight Street near the railroad station. The new post-office is one of the finest of its kind both in beauty and utility. The ordinary postal business is conducted on the first floor, and the upper floors are occupied by the offices of various governmental departments.

A new administration had come in 1933 with the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt as President, and almost on the heels of this change in national government came the closing of the banks throughout the Nation for a ten-day period. This was the climax of the financial depression which started with the stock market crash of 1929. The Springfield banks closed like the rest, and in the process



the Western Massachusetts Bank and Trust Company failed to reopen. The NRA began, and many of the unemployed found work on the various alphabetical projects sponsored by the government, notably the CWA, ERA, PWA and WPA, which came to the city in succession.

Labor agitation is also distinctive of this period. The United Labor Party was formed, but failed to get the Central Labor Union endorsement. A strike of large proportions came to the city when the newspapers went through a six months printers' strike, with some violence and a great deal of agitation. A separate newspaper was formed for a time by the striking contingent, but this proved unsuccessful and was dropped, and the publishers of the Springfield newspapers finally gained victory, although at great expense.

For many years there was agitation in Hampden County over building a new and modern bridge across the Connecticut River, in keeping with the times and the demands of automobile traffic. The old toll bridge, while an historical landmark with a fine background of tradition, did not enhance the appearance of this section, and at various times fear was expressed that the wooden bridge was unsafe. This fear was a force in the creation of the beautiful and monumental bridge to come. It was argued, further, that a new bridge with a wide lane and a sweeping approach was necessary so that traffic could move at a proper speed, which was prohibited by the narrow width of the old bridge.

As a culmination of this constant pressure, the county commissioners finally sanctioned the construction of a new bridge and bids were submitted in March of 1920. Fay, Spofford & Thorndike were the supervising engineers, while H. P. Converse & Company were designated as contractors. This was not accomplished without opposition. The cost of the bridge was estimated to be somewhat over \$6,000,000, of which the city of Springfield was to pay about half and the other cities and towns in the county the balance. Despite the fact that Springfield's share of the cost was generous, there was marked opposition, particularly from Westfield and Holyoke. The officials of those cities felt that while their communities were benefited by the bridge at the north end of the city, they would receive little direct benefit from the proposed new bridge. In view of this fact, they protested violently at the idea of contributing sizeable sums of money

toward a project that seemingly benefited directly only the city of Springfield and the town of West Springfield.

Another dispute arose, this time in Springfield alone, concerning the point on the Springfield river front from which the new bridge would start. One group advocated that it start at Bridge Street, on the site of the old toll bridge; another recommended that it begin at Vernon Street; and still another was in favor of its running directly into Court Square. The disadvantages of building on the old site became obvious when it was pointed out that great delay would be encountered before the old toll bridge would be torn down and the great sandstone piles dug up from the bed of the river to make way for the new.

The locating of the new bridge at the river front in back of Court Square had its obvious disadvantages, too. Had it been built there, the approach would have reached the grade of Springfield Street somewhere in the vicinity of the Old First Church, and would have encroached on property that would have been difficult to purchase or to take legally. Moreover, the architectural effect of the entire municipal group would have been seriously impaired.

The Springfield City Council favored the "Vernon Street Plan" and the Chamber of Commerce supported it also, while a petition signed by 17,000 inhabitants of the county favoring the location was presented to the special bridge commission. With this weight of public opinion behind them, the Vernon Street adherents saw their proposal go through.

There were other points of dispute. The plan of the new bridge called for a sixty-foot width, but a storm of protest arose from the people of the county and the width was increased to eighty feet. A plan was also proposed to beautify the river front by moving the tracks of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad across the river, running them through West Springfield and Agawam, so the main river front of the city would be free of tracks and trains. Another argument in favor of this proposal was that if the tracks were allowed to remain, an expensive viaduct would have to be built over them before the actual bridge building itself could start. The plan failed dismally when it was shown that the cost of diverting tracks to the opposite side of the river would be far greater than the cost of a viaduct, and the cost in delay, inconvenience, rerouting and

other railroad difficulties, although difficult to measure in dollars and cents, would be felt just as keenly.

Work was finally started after these preliminary problems had been solved. The bridge was to be the reinforced concrete arch rib type of five sweeping arches and six piers. This design in itself was an unusual one, giving the bridge a certain freedom and openness which makes for grace and symmetry with no loss of strength or utility.

In exploring the bed of the river, engineers found that there was no solid rock, but instead hard layers of sand and clay. Wooden piles were driven down into these hard layers and on top of them the bridge piers and abutments were erected. There was some fear expressed that the wooden piles would in a short time decay and fall apart, but technical experts explained that so long as the wooden piles of the foundation were buried below the bed of the river, they could not decay and would be as durable as concrete itself. The piers were faced with granite from below the low water line to above the high water line to protect them from ice or floating *débris*.

There were several requirements that the engineers had to meet before they finished. Not the least of these were those presented by the War Department of the United States. Since the Connecticut River was classified as a navigable stream by the government, it was necessary to provide a certain clearance beneath the bridge so that vessels could pass, if necessary. There was a requirement also that fixed the highest point of the span about one-third of the distance across the stream, making for an elevation of about thirty feet above the Springfield streets. Another regulation, common to all bridges, no matter what size, was the "load" regulation. The Memorial Bridge had to be sturdily built so that it would carry twenty-ton trucks, a continuous line of trolley cars on each of the two street railway tracks, and also the heaviest mobile ordnance vehicles of the United States War Department.

The contractors, after the way was clear to start the construction, first laid out a small shipyard just below the bridge site, a curiosity to the people of the inland city. Here several scows were built for the purpose of ferrying heavy materials through the Enfield Canal on the way up to Springfield, the width of each being about the same as the distance across the canal. Another giant construction was the



railroad yard which the contractors built in Hampden Park, leasing the land from the Boston and Maine Railroad. A half-mile of side-track was built from the wharf to the park, which was used as a storage place for the bridge materials.

The Converse Company had to bring equipment from some of their other jobs, especially from Virginia, where the company had been doing a great deal of war work. Freight transportation was in bad shape at the time, and the bridge job was delayed more than three months because of this. The Converse Company enlisted the aid of the county commissioners, particularly that of Charles C. Spellman, head of the board, in appealing to the Interstate Commerce Commission at Washington in giving priority rights to the shipments for the work, but it was late in the summer of 1920 before the job really got into full swing. This episode was the only serious impediment to the work, and the bridge was finished before the scheduled time.

In 1922 the structure was completed, and it was a thing of beauty, broad and efficient. It spanned the river in graceful arches, and its individuality was heightened by the four great towers topped by bronze lanterns, which were erected at each end of the channel piers. Smaller towers, or pylons, marked the symmetrical spans, leaving the two western spans to balance architecturally the viaduct over the railroad.

There was opposition to the erection of the towers at first, on the basis that too much money would be spent on these purely ornamental structures. Experts pointed out that the cost of the towers would only be two per cent. of the total cost of the entire bridge, and would enhance its appearance appreciably, and the opposition died down. The bridge was named in memory of the patriotic part the county played in the military engagements that America entered. Each tower has a bronze tablet. The tablets on the downstream shafts commemorate the part played in the pioneer and colonial period and in the Revolutionary War; those on the upstream shafts commemorate the Civil War and the World War.

The dedication of the bridge in early August of 1922 was one of the greatest public celebrations ever to take place in Springfield. A grandstand was constructed on the bridge, seating 4,000 people, and many thousands more filled the rest of the bridge. There was an historical pageant, memorializing every period of the history of the



county from the time of William Pynchon down to modern times, and in this Holyoke, Chicopee, Westfield and a host of the smaller towns of Hampden County participated. Floats in the parade commemorated the first cabin on the Agawam River and many other buildings and scenes of historical significance. At night great floodlights played on the bridge and on the river, which was filled with small craft of every description. A spectacular display of fireworks lit up the sky at night, although the effect of many of the set pieces was lost to the spectators on the bridge when an unfriendly south wind blew the smoke in front of them.

Through it all the old toll bridge watched silent, dark, inscrutable. It was the old forgotten in the new. Around its entrances were placarded various gaudy advertisements for commercial products, which somehow could not hide or mar the majesty of the historic structure. In a way, the old toll bridge had the last word, because as the bombs burst in the air, their loud reverberations rolling down to the crowd, there would be a short pause, and the same noise would again come in the echo from the long, barn-like bridge a short distance upstream.

The bridge was dedicated by Julia Sanderson, famous on Broadway. Governor Cox attended and passed between long lines of soldiers drawn up at the bridge entrance. Charles Bosworth delivered the dedication speech, eulogizing the great events and the great men in the Connecticut Valley.

From time to time disasters have come to Hampden County. Some have been large and some small, some caused by man and some by nature—wars, accidents, disease, fires, storms, and even earthquakes. Each separate catastrophe has for a time occupied its place in the sun and taken its separate toll of life and property. Each, in the imminent rush and bustle of living, has caused its momentary ripple in the serenity of the county and then passed on, to be faintly remembered or completely forgotten.

In the month of March, 1936, a disaster came that will never be forgotten so long as there are old men to remember it and historians to record it for future generations. A disaster which dwarfed into pale insignificance each one before it, which left misery and destruction in its wake, which paralyzed industry and crippled cities and towns, which drove people from their homes in terror and destroyed their belongings, and which cost millions of dollars in rehabilitation.

During the first two weeks of March rumors came down from the North of quick-melting snow and ice, which were pouring extra water into the upper Connecticut River and its tributaries. Residents of Westfield, Holyoke, Springfield and the other centers of the county paid little attention. They had seen floods before. The Connecticut could be counted upon to overflow its banks every spring, and low-lying farm lands and a few buildings along the river bank would be inundated. The 1927 flood, it was true, had reached the unprecedented height of 22.44 feet at Springfield, and had caused considerable property damage. But that had been an extraordinary event, brought about by freakish November weather. Residents of Hampden County knew what a real flood was only through accounts in the newspapers and through the news reels. The Yang-Tse River in far off China, or the Mississippi in this country, might become temperamental and overflow their banks; but these were distant places, and the Connecticut was, year in and year out, well behaved.

Then the flood struck with sudden, dramatic swiftness. Mountain snows, softened by continued unseasonable warm weather, turned placid streams farther north into raging torrents. Southeast storms, driving hard, deluged the area with tons of water. Whole communities in New Hampshire, Vermont and the upper part of Massachusetts were engulfed, railroad tracks and highways were submerged, crippling transportation and communication, bridges were torn away from their moorings, and power plants were rendered useless, throwing large areas into darkness and leaving factory machines merely inanimate steel skeletons. Those living on the lowlands fled from their homes, carrying what they could of their personal belongings. The river was a rushing, seething torrent.

In Springfield the river rose at an alarming rate. Hundreds of automobiles, filled with curious sightseers, choked the Holyoke road with traffic on the way to view the Holyoke Dam, which stood staunchly against the powerful thrust of the onrushing water that was pouring over it at such a height that it could be measured only with difficulty. Officials expressed some concern for a time as to its ability to withstand the terrific strain placed upon it. Supposedly authentic reports from the million dollar dam at Vernon, Vermont, warned that there was danger of the dam going at any moment, and that if it did go the result would be the worst disaster ever to take

place in New England. The flow over the Turners Falls Dam reached the staggering volume of 230,000 cubic feet a second.

By March 18 the people of Springfield began to feel real alarm. Orders were given by the superintendent of streets, Cornelius E. Phillips, for patrolling the entire north end section, and having an adequate supply of sandbags ready for use in the low part just across the Chicopee line. Every possible precaution was taken, but nothing was equal to the rise of the water. The Westfield River, ordinarily a calm tributary of the Connecticut, passed the peak of the 1927 flood and rose at the phenomenal rate of two and one-half feet per hour. The Great River Bridge, the only connection between the north and south parts of Westfield, was closed. Water reached the first floor windows of many homes in that city, and residents evacuated their homes. Company H of the National Guard was mobilized at the new Franklin Street Armory, ready for an immediate call. Hundreds of school children, dismissed from school before noon, were unable to reach their homes, and the telephone wires buzzed with frantic calls from worried parents. Water submerged railroad tracks in all directions, cutting off transportation. Report after report came in foreshadowing the havoc that was to be wreaked in Springfield.

It was on the morning of March 19 that Springfield first felt the direct and paralyzing effect of the flood. The north end became a victim of the sullen waters. The river swept over the dike in the Plainfield Street section, the main volume of water pouring in through a break about eight hundred feet from the North End Bridge. Immediately two local companies of the 104th Regiment, National Guard, were called out by Sheriff David Manning and were assigned to flood and relief work. The river at the same time jumped its banks in the south end, in Agawam, and in West Springfield.

Five thousand people fled from their homes. Many of them stayed until the last minute, staring with unbelieving eyes at the rising waters. Some, more optimistic than the others, waited a little too long, and had to be taken to dry land in boats. At one A. M. the water had reached the level of 23.9 feet, 1.2 feet above the 1927 record height. The street department had fought to keep the river from cresting the dike, and weary men reinforced it with bag after bag of sand. But like a beaten and disorganized army, they were forced to retreat, and the waters rolled over the entire Plainfield



Street and upper north end section. On that memorable morning acetylene flood light played along the dike and curious people from the upper sections of the city, who ordinarily would be sound asleep at this early hour, came to stare with amazed eyes at the strange spectacle.

An area one-half mile square was quickly flooded to a depth of two feet in the south end section. Columbus Avenue, Main Street, Oswego Street and Marble Street were covered with over a foot of water. Dozens of automobiles were stalled and towed out to prevent further damage. All the families on Main Street, West Springfield, south of Park Avenue, were ordered from their homes by the town selectmen in the dead of night, and many awoke to find the water swirling around their cellar windows. Lantern lights flared and bobbed along the great dark expanse of water where land had once been. In Chicopee more than one hundred families from the Ferry Lane section alone were taken from their homes. Street railway service was disrupted, and trolleys going to Holyoke could proceed only as far as the Springfield Country Club on the Riverdale Road, and shortly afterward could not even get out of Springfield. Every extra operator available was called in by the telephone company to keep communication with the outside world. The city officials met in extraordinary session, calling on every relief agency available to help, and the response was magnificent. Those living in the higher areas were asked by radio to open their homes for the helpless refugees, who in many cases had only the clothes they wore. Arrangements were quickly made to use schools as centers of relief shelter for the homeless. Red Cross workers and those of other relief agencies reported for immediate duty to their superiors.

West Springfield, where the land is generally lower, felt the worst effects of the flood somewhat before Springfield did. The water broke over the bank at Chapin Street close to the Boston and Albany tracks and cut a swath straight through the town, following several streets. Later the dike behind the General Fibre Box Company gave way, and the rampant water flowed over the meadows south of Memorial Avenue and threatened the Merrick section. Some people, still inclined to disparage the menace despite the evidence crying out before them, refused to leave, but when the section near Circuit Avenue was flooded as the dike in that area gave way, people asked no



more questions nor advanced further arguments. They left with all possible speed.

Main Street in Springfield was jammed with cars, as the routes both north and south were closed. Bluecoats worked frantically to unravel the jam and finally succeeded by rerouting traffic up State Street and through Chestnut and Maple. Railroad routes were being cut off hourly, and worried crowds filled the waiting room at the Union Station. Among these were numerous college girls who, taking the situation philosophically, sat in fours on the floor of the station and played bridge.

The spectre of fear was everywhere. Fear of a food shortage, fear of typhoid and other diseases, fear of a milk shortage. Store after store on Main Street and the lower area around it closed as water backed up through the sewers and flooded cellars. Frantic store owners and their help worked against time, carrying goods to the upper floors or placing them on upper shelves. Executives wore hip boots and toiled side by side with their employees. Suction pumps were at a premium, the demand far exceeding the supply. Shoe stores sold out their entire stock of rubber boots and telegraphed for additional shipments. The water made no exceptions. Large stores as well as small fell victims. All along Main Street, D. H. Brigham and Company, Forbes and Wallace, Johnson's Bookstore, Meekins, Packard and Wheat, the Albert Steiger Company, the Springfield Public Market and others had their basements inundated.

Public excitement was at a fever pitch. Idle, curious crowds swarmed along the main streets, some with grave faces, some smiling, as though it were a huge public holiday. Eyes turned constantly toward the west, where the river rolled. Newsboys hawked their extras in the street, their strident voices laden with excitement as they raced down the sidewalk waving their papers. Above it all was the steady throb, throb of the pumps as arching streams of water poured out of the basements onto the streets. Areas were roped off and the National Guard came out in their khaki uniforms and patrolled the streets, aided by members of the Naval Reserve. The commercial life of the city was stricken and only in the cellars below the street level was there activity. Theatres without exception on Main Street closed their doors as water in some cases came up over the seats. An

overworked sewer caused a terrific explosion in the morning which shook the Hampden County Courthouse and other buildings in the vicinity. Still the river kept rising at the rate of a foot an hour.

Drama was enacted at the Hampden County Jail on York Street as the waters swirled over the tracks and around the building. This emergency was met by Sheriff Manning, who commandeered rowboats and transferred the inmates to safety on dry land and from there to a secret destination, later discovered to be the Prison Colony at Norfolk. An added disaster was the fire at the Moore Drop Forging Company, which caused \$100,000 worth of damage. Firemen called to the scene by two alarms helplessly watched the building which was surrounded by water.

The North End, South End and Memorial bridges were closed to traffic. Driftwood, parts of houses, dead cattle and every conceivable kind of *débris* rode on the bosom of the swollen stream. As the hours passed into the day of March 20, 15,000 people in Springfield alone were driven from their homes and took refuge in the various schools and churches throughout the city which had been turned into emergency relief centers. Volunteer workers took charge. Appeals were broadcast for money to aid the refugees and purchase supplies for their maintenance. Fears were allayed somewhat when Alderman Philip V. Erard reported that there was no immediate chance of a food or milk shortage. There was little looting throughout the flooded areas as National Guardsmen and others maintained vigilance. Rumors flew thick and fast. The South Hadley Bridge was tottering. At several locations heavy railroad cars filled with coal were left on railroad bridges to prevent them from being ripped from their moorings and swept away.

Power failed and a great part of the city in the downtown area was thrown into darkness. Without power business and transportation were crippled. Ten thousand industrial and other factory workers were thrown out of work. The presses at the various newspapers went dead, and the editorial rooms kept going by light from oil and alcohol lamps. Flooded manholes, which submerged conduits and transformers, made it impossible to provide any kind of service through emergency tie-ups with outside plants. Westfield and other cities were plunged into darkness before this.

The main streets of Springfield at night presented an unforgettable scene. The buildings, looming in the blackness, looked like haunted tombs. The streets were deserted, except for an occasional shadowy figure of a guardsman with a flashlight. Pedestrians without official passes were questioned. Although martial law was not officially in existence, it was in the air. Canoes were used to ferry an occasional pedestrian through the Main Street railroad arch as though the scene were in far off Venice instead of Springfield in Hampden County.

Through the coöperation of the Holyoke "Transcript," people were still able to receive news of the havoc wrought by the turbulent flood. That newspaper generously contributed its composing room and press room facilities, and while the "Republican" was editorially turned out in Springfield, in the main, it was printed in Holyoke, while the "Union" was printed in several different places. Transportation of copy and some type was made possible through a roundabout route into Holyoke. Special loops of the Associated Press and Universal Service were set up to give the telegraph news.

At four o'clock on the morning of March 20 the flood reached its high crest of 28.6 feet. It held for a short time and then began to drop, but only a tenth of a foot an hour. Five hours later the river had receded less than a foot. Yet, although the rising of the river had stopped at last, the real crisis had only begun.

First came the vital problem of relief as thousands of refugees needed care and attention. The Red Cross, under the leadership of Dr. W. A. R. Chapin, was battling against overwhelming odds to handle systematically the horde of refugees who kept crowding into the relief centers. Women's groups, church groups, clubs, city organizations, all did their part and responded with their time and money. Army cots were placed in the corridors of the schools and people accustomed to privacy lived in semi-public. Nurses and doctors gave generously of their time.

Commercially the county suffered terrific financial reverses. Over \$3,000,000 in damages in the business district of Springfield alone was estimated by city officials, and a total damage throughout the city from \$6,000,000 to \$7,000,000. So widespread was the devastation caused, and so multiple the property and goods affected, that per-



haps even an approximate figure will never be computed. Bridges weakened or torn away, huge holes in the roads, with ripped up paving blocks scattered about, sewers rendered useless, a foot deep of mud in some of the flooded sections, buildings undermined and akilter, merchandise lost, workers idle—the list is infinite. Months of rehabilitation will be required before the county can even begin to fight its way out from the ruck.

It is fitting that this history of Springfield should end with the three hundredth anniversary of its settlement by that courageous pioneer, William Pynchon. In 1636, Springfield had but a few small dwellings. In 1936 it is a busy city of tall buildings, of beautiful homes, of paved streets, of fine public institutions, of everything that comprises a thoroughly modern metropolis.

The anniversary celebration was spread over quite a period, but centered in the month of May. The committee in charge was originally appointed by Mayor Dwight R. Winter, in 1933, and elaborate plans were made, which were somewhat dampened by the disastrous flood in March, 1936. But the city rose triumphant over its afflictions in this century, as the little village of Springfield did nearly three hundred years before when fire swept through its homes.

The celebration began with a banquet in the auditorium on the evening of May 13, when greetings were exchanged with Springfield in England by means of the transatlantic telephone. During the program Mayor Henry Martens placed a floral crown on the pageant queen, Eleanor Cabana, of Technical High School. The banquet was attended by Lorna Magore, of the mother town in Great Britain, a little hamlet virtually unchanged in the last three hundred years. Mayors and other representatives of surrounding towns, once included in Springfield's large territory, were also present.

The following evening was taken up with the three hundredth anniversary ball, a colorful affair, preceded by a reception in the mahogany room. Among the honored guests were Lieutenant-Governor Joseph L. Hurley and Mayor Frederick Mansfield, of Boston. Some of the attendants were costumed in old-time apparel, which added much to the interest of the occasion.

May 15 was school day and pageants and exhibitions featuring the past history took place all over the city. On Old Home Day which followed, downtown Springfield celebrated with block dancing,



historical exhibits in the store windows, and the circulation of wooden nickels, coined of balsam wood by the tercentenary committee.

On Sunday the churches held appropriate services, some of them with costumed tithing men in attendance.

"Doctors' Day" was marked by a pilgrimage to the grave of Dr. John E. Leonard, Springfield's first doctor, who was buried in the Agawam Cemetery in 1744. Dr. Henry E. Sigerist, of Johns Hopkins University, was the speaker at a public meeting in the evening.

The weather was uncertain on the evening of May 19 when the pageant, "The Wings of Time," was scheduled to be presented for the first time, but it was successfully presented on the three following evenings to increasingly large audiences. The pageant was held in Pynchon Park and opened with a court scene in which the queen of Springfield appeared to greet visitors from the North, South, East and West, followed by Miss Columbia and her forty-eight states.

The ballet of creation, which came next, was a symbolical episode interpretive of the Spirits of Nature at play. An Indian village scene preceded the coming of Pynchon and his party in the shallop and the signing of the deed to the land. More settlers came, and an early church service was shown in the pageant. Tragedies followed in the burning of Pynchon's book and the episode of King Philip's War.

The school scene was a striking contrast to present-day Springfield, which has nothing to compare with Goody Gregory in the stocks. A minuet made a beautiful opening for the Revolutionary War with its tableau of the making of the flag, the thrilling leave of the minute men, and the well-known picture, "The Spirit of '76."

The early 1800's were represented by a stagecoach, and a wedding party which danced the Virginia reel. Lincoln and John Brown were central figures in scenes of the Civil War, to which a lighter touch was added by another ballet.

In 1886 Springfield celebrated its two hundred and fiftieth anniversary and the grand ball which was held at that time was reproduced in the pageant. A tableau of the World War was followed by scenes showing industrial growth and the progress of education.

The Masque of Nations was a gorgeous spectacle, which included dances of many nations as well as the American Jackies and U. S. A.

Girls. The finale depicted the entire cast, literally, in the immense Wheel of Progress.

The cast was drawn from schools and clubs, various organizations, and the surrounding towns. Walter Kerr, of Agawam, represented William Pynchon; James Sullivan was Abraham Lincoln; and Charles F. Weckworth, Springfield College authority on Indian dancing, made a striking figure.

Springfield's famous wanderer, Johnny Appleseed, had a pageant all to himself, when a boulder in his memory was dedicated in Stebbins Park on the afternoon of May 28. The Springfield Garden Club presented a bronze marker for the boulder. Over a thousand school children took part in the exercises which commemorated the life of this simple lover of nature. A Johnny Appleseed Arboretum has been started in the park and one of the gifts it has already received is eight apple trees from Fort Wayne, Indiana, which are said to be descendants of those planted by John Chapman himself. The Art Museum was a center of interest during this historic period with its exhibits of old furniture, portraits and other interesting relics of the past.

The tercentenary exercises are planned to include a Boy Scout circus at the Eastern States Coliseum and a parade sometime in the fall. Greetings were exchanged with Texas, which is celebrating its centennial, and with Providence and Harvard University, both observing three hundredth anniversaries.

The people of Springfield have found, as President Roosevelt stated to them in a letter: "The observance of the tercentenary of the city's founding is sure to stimulate and quicken interest in the past."



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PART II  
REGIONAL

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*Chicopee and Skipmuck*

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## CHAPTER I

### *Chicopee and Skipmuck*

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The first settlers in Chicopee were Japhet and Henry Chapin and their brother-in-law, Rowland Thomas. Japhet and Henry were sons of Deacon Samuel Chapin, one of the most valued of Springfield's early settlers. He was influential in the affairs of the town and province as well as in the church. His social position is shown by the edifying record that in the meetinghouse Goodwife Chapin was to sit in the seat along with the minister's wife and Mrs. Holyoke. An old writer has said, "God sifted three kingdoms that He might plant the finest of the wheat in New England." From whatever climate or province these sturdy ancestors of ours came, their history shows they were the finest of the wheat.

The early records are imperfect, and it is difficult to determine the exact date of the first settlement of Chicopee, but we know that by 1675 Japhet and Henry were in homes of their own. Japhet's house was on the bank of the Connecticut River, in Chicopee Street, where for a long time the cellar hole and the old road leading to it were in sight. Henry's house was near the west end of Exchange Street in Chicopee Center, and Rowland Thomas lived nearby. The first land grant was in 1659, when a farm was given to John Pynchon. It lay over the Chicopee River, with the islands of the river below the wading place and the meadow on the south side. Also there was a swamp betwixt the meadow and the river, and one boundary ran up the "Grate River." The first mention of a road is in 1665.

Sons and daughters were born to these Chapin brothers, and in a few years there were eighty-eight grandchildren, and other settlers joined them. At first the Indians were friendly, but King Philip's War changed all that. Springfield was burned and the frontiers were in constant anxiety.

Hannah, daughter of Japhet Chapin, was married, in 1703, to John Sheldon, of Deerfield. When she was preparing her wedding

outfit her mother was careful that she should have a dress suitable to wear into captivity. The dress was made of flannel probably spun and woven by her own hands. Three months after her marriage Deerfield was attacked in the night. In jumping from a window Hannah sprained her ankle and was unable to escape or secure her dress, and a few days afterward she saw it on an Indian woman. With other prisoners Hannah was taken to Canada and their footsteps stained the snow with blood. By the energy of her father-in-law she was later redeemed and brought to her old home in Chicopee, and from there she returned to Deerfield. She was probably ransomed by the payment of twenty pounds, which seems to have been the price put by the French on their English women captives.

Greylock, the famous Indian chief, after whom the mountain in Berkshire was named, was often in this vicinity. He had only one foot, as the other was lost in a trap, and his trail was easily detected but he was never captured. His object seems to have been not so much scalps as prisoners, whom he sold in Canada.

A little girl in her trundle bed was roused one night from sleep by someone creeping from the window across the bed. She was too frightened to move and as she knew that her safety depended on perfect quiet she watched the Indian while he helped himself to food from the cupboard. He left the house as stealthily as he came. It might have passed for the dream of a frightened child, but the empty cupboard confirmed the tale. The thief was Greylock, who was too hungry to be dangerous.

Skipmuck, a locality about a mile east of Chicopee Falls, that was started about 1660, was later attacked by the Indians. Some of the settlers were killed and one or more taken captive. Two soldiers had just finished cleaning their guns and they were saying: "Now we are ready for the dogs," when a young girl who was spinning by the window exclaimed: "They have come." She ran and in her haste and fright drew the latchstring from the door shutting out the family. Lieutenant Wright, who was at work in a shop nearby crept through a window and with this daughter escaped. The soldiers and one child were killed, and another child was left for dead, but revived and lived to grow up. Mrs. Wright was taken prisoner.

The front door of the house built by David Chapin, about 1705, was thickly studded with nails to prevent the Indians from splitting it

open with their tomahawks. Samuel Chapin was fired on and wounded while crossing the Connecticut returning from his work on the west side, but no serious injury seems to have come to any of the other settlers in Chicopee Street.

During these early years we find Japhet and Henry Chapin leaders in public affairs. Japhet's name appears as selectman, assessor and juror. Henry served on various committees and was deputy to the public assembly at Boston. His integrity is shown in this, that while four pounds was allowed by the town to their deputies, he refused to take more than thirty-four shillings, insisting that this was all it had cost him. Henry Chapin was one of those who were given permission to fish in Chicopee River. In 1694 iron works and a blacksmith in Skipmuck are mentioned and also a cornmill. Previous to this all the sawing and grinding had been done at the mills in Springfield. But in spite of all the difficulty of drawing lumber so far, log houses were not as common here as in most new countries. The dwellings were frame houses, many of them with two stories. Some were built with two stories in front and one in the rear with what was called a lean-to roof.

It has been said that after the burning of Springfield the people thought seriously of leaving, but the records do not show this. Other names appear showing that settlers did not fear to come even in those troublous times. In 1683 Henry Chapin deeded land on the west side of the river to an Irishman, and he with other settlers who came to that vicinity gave the name of Ireland Parish to that part of the town. Until this time it seems to have been known as "The Upper Wigwams," showing that there was an Indian settlement near.

In 1712 a county road was laid out from Hadley to the lower end of Enfield. This followed what is now known as the "old road" to Willimansett.

The first mention of a school in Chicopee is in 1713, when the sum of ten shillings was paid by the town to Daniel Cooley's daughter for keeping school. There had been schools in Springfield since 1641, but it was impossible for the smaller children and inconvenient for the older ones to go so far. All children were to be taught to read and must learn the catechism. About 1721 the first schoolhouse in Chicopee was built on Chicopee Street. It was a one-story building, unpainted, with a huge fireplace, and stood until the "old red schoolhouse" was built in 1761. Each parent was required to furnish one



load of wood to be brought to the schoolhouse in October, and no scholar was to have benefit of the wood until his share was brought.

The school punishments were unique. A remedy to prevent whispering was a short wedge inserted between the upper and lower teeth, thus keeping the mouth open; but a girl might simply have to stand with her two lips pinched together with her fingers. For restlessness, a book was placed on the head, and the child expected to keep still so it would not fall. Sometimes a child was made to stoop over and hold his finger on a crack in the floor for a certain time, or to stand on one foot only. If the penalty consisted in holding several heavy books on the outstretched palm, and the hand drooped lower and lower, the teacher would give a whack on the elbow with the ruler. To be blindfolded and stood in the corner with hands tied behind one's back was bad enough, but no shame for a boy equaled that of being made to sit with the girls.

Much has been said of the hardship and poverty of those early days. Of poverty, in the sense of suffering for the necessities of life, there was little. Game and wild fowl abounded in the woods and the rivers were full of fish. Every householder was required to keep at least three sheep. These and their fields of flax supplied them with clothing and bedding. Every young girl was taught to spin and the stronger ones learned to weave, both plain and fancy, according to their skill and taste. Some of their table furnishings were of wood and others of pewter, but the wood was scoured to a beautiful whiteness and the pewter shone like silver.

Mrs. Thomas Chapin said she had two sons who were too rich to be comfortable, Abel and Japhet; and she had one son, Thomas, who was just about right as regards property; and one, Shem, who was too poor. Abel, whom she called too rich, was afterward known as Landlord Abel. He built the first house in Willimanset, east of the railroad station, but about 1730 removed to Chicopee Street, where he erected a three-story house with a gambrel roof. Here he kept a tavern for many years. Some portions of his account books that have been preserved are interesting as showing the habits and customs of the period, and the items are chiefly of what was sold at the bar: "rum and cider," "bowls of punch" and "mugs of flip."

One of Landlord Abel's possessions was a "Negro Man." Others were a large Bible and law books. He had Watts' Psalms and

Hymns and Mather on Congregational principles, and other books along such lines. They were a serious collection, with one exception, and that was "Robinson Crusoe."

For more than sixty years the people of Chicopee continued their connection with the old First Church of Springfield, finding their way on foot or on horseback, fording the Chicopee River at the Indian wading place, or sometimes going by canoe down the Connecticut. The Sabbath services and the weekly lectures were their edification and delight and their lives were regulated by its ordinances, and when death came they were laid to rest in the old burying ground at the foot of Elm Street, on the banks of the Connecticut. The faithfulness of these people in going to meeting was wonderful. For instance, Ezekiel Chapin said that for twenty-six Sabbaths in succession he went regularly to Springfield to meeting.

The first allusion to any public service in Chicopee is in 1728, when a meeting of the local church was held either in the schoolhouse or in one of the homes. From time to time there was a lecture or thanksgiving sermon preached, and as the group grew stronger money was raised for preaching during the severe cold of the winter. The homes of the Springfield people were mostly on what are now Main and State streets and their farmlands were at a distance, some of them across the "Great River." The mother church was about to build a new meetinghouse. A petition was sent from Chicopee asking leave to withdraw, but it was dismissed. The church in Springfield was unwilling to lose these faithful men and women who had contributed so much to its growth and prosperity and replied that other advantages more than compensated them for the extra fatigue endured. But as soon as the petitioners were assured of a favorable answer they set to work. On the evening of January 2, 1751, they met and "all with united voices declared for cutting timber for a Meeting House." The next day about forty men went into the woods, all of them volunteers, with weather "clear, cold and still." January 4, about twenty men finished the work of the day before. "The cold somewhat abated." On the seventh a storm set in, but at the same time it furnished snow for "sledding the Meeting-House timber." A thaw delayed the work, but in February the timber was brought home very successfully.

Winds and storms followed the beautiful February weather and it was not until April that timber-hewing began. This month they made brick and so the work went on until June 5, when it is recorded that "thro ye indulgence of Heaven, we have our Meeting-House raised with great safety and joy." At first the meetinghouse was covered with "Ruff Boards" only. It was used in this way until 1752, when the outside was covered with quarter boards and it was voted to glaze all the windows and to do the plastering overhead and finish all the lower part. The meetinghouse was nearly square, without bell or steeple and it stood in the middle of the then broad street. It was built of heavy oak timbers and there was carved work over the windows.

For those days it was a good looking building. The seats at first were benches, but afterward were changed to pews, the seats of which were hinged and could be raised for standing. As the custom then was to stand during prayer and to sit during singing, there was often a noisy clatter when the prayer began. The pew on the right of the pulpit was for the minister's family and the two in front were set apart, one for the deacons and one for the elderly men. A high pulpit was on the west side, with the sounding board above it. Some of the children thought it looked as if the minister were shut up in a box with a cover ready to fall on his head. The pulpit was painted pale green and it had a velvet cushion. The communion table was also painted pale green and it was suspended on hinges and raised or lowered at pleasure. On three sides of the house was a gallery well filled in later years with young men and maidens, who led the service of song. One corner was reserved as the "Negro's seat," for there were slaves in those days.

Time went on and John McKinstry, son of Reverend John McKinstry, was ordained. The father was a graduate of Edinburgh University, "a gentleman of good abilities and popular talents." The son was a graduate of Yale and was fourth in a class of twelve. His father, in his seventy-fifth year, preached the ordination sermon. Eliza McKinstry, who remembered her grandfather dressed for meeting, said he wore a wig, a three-cornered hat, breeches, long stockings and shoe and knee buckles. Probably the other ministers were dressed much the same and also many in the audience, though at this time the wig was going out of fashion and the "queue" taking its place. In



those days all ministers were settled for life, which was well, as the smallness of the population made an ordination a rare and interesting occasion. Not only did the churches respond, but friends and relatives came to share in the joy. A genuine dinner was prepared and the big brick oven was heated again and again.

The minister's salary was to be paid one-half in provisions—wheat, rye and Indian corn, and one-half in silver. Mr. McKinstry was also to have "Twenty-five cords of wood the first year, one cord to be added each year for ten years." Later, it was voted to provide the minister with a sufficiency of firewood and likewise with "candlewood." Candlewood is an old name for pine knots. They were abundant and easily gathered from the pine trees on the plains, and when burned on the hearth their light often took the place of candle light.

Eight children were born in the old parsonage and to one of these, Mr. John, we are indebted for many interesting incidents. He owned the first thermometer in Chicopee Street and was a great reader. Soon after the new minister's settlement the French and Indian War broke out, bringing great anxiety. A number of young men enlisted. Ensign Moses Chapin was taken prisoner at Lake George and at first fared badly; but he could talk a little Latin and interested in his behalf a Catholic priest, who helped him in getting some needed comforts. He was a surveyor and his surveying books in Latin were long treasured in the family. Caleb was killed at Lake George and his brother, Captain Elisha, was cruelly massacred by the Indians at what is now Williamstown. His house was near the upper end of the street and he had been commander at Fort Massachusetts, and becoming interested in that part of the country he removed there with his family. A number of families were together in the fort and while most of the men were away in the fields an attack was made by the Indians. They were repulsed by the women dressed in their husbands' clothes, but afterward the Indians succeeded in taking some of the men prisoners. Among them was Captain Chapin, and he was brought to the walls and tortured to death in sight of his wife and children. Mrs. Chapin went back with her children to her early home. One of her sons graduated from Dartmouth College and entered the ministry. Another was a captain in the Revolutionary War. By that time the forest path had grown into a pleas-



ant well-shaded street with substantial houses and barns. Captain Ephraim was living on the farm, keeping tavern and fattening cattle for the Boston market; Landlord Abel kept the tavern on the east side of the street; and his brother Japhet on the next farm beyond, and there were various others of the Chapin clan in the region round about.

A little low one-story house which stood in Johnny Cake Hollow up to about thirty years ago was a relic of these early days. Deeds in the possession of the Snow family which own it dated back to before 1700, but did not go back to its beginning. It had a large square chimney and wooden hinges on the doors. A large barrel of corn meal usually stood in the shed and the owner intimated that the Hollow got its name from its staple food. In its later days the house was papered inside with the "Springfield Republican" and reinforced outside with sections of packing boxes from local concerns.

In 1753 it was voted that the parish "take care that a Drum be beat to call the People to meeting at Proper seasons." The drum was beaten up and down the street. It was owned by Ebenezer Jones and he was paid when it was broken and a conch shell probably took its place. Another vote was "to agree with some person or persons to sweep and cleanse the meeting-house." By 1774 Springfield had begun to take into "serious and deliberate consideration the present dangerous condition of the province." The situation was indeed trying, for most of these men and women were of English blood, and those who were not had found safety and protection under English government and law. They had brought to New England not only the English language, but English customs and habits. Their public officers were called by English names and the minister was the parson. The nine o'clock evening bell still common in many New England towns was the curfew of Old England. Following the English custom their farms were divided by ditches, some of which still remain, marking boundaries laid out in the long ago. The old home in the Mother Country was still dear to them. They mourned England's danger or defeat by solemn days of fasting and prayer and when, in 1746, the Duke of Cumberland obtained the remarkable victory against the rebels in north Britain, they kept glad thanksgiving. But they could not allow even England to oppress them and when the town appointed a committee of public safety money was voted to teach soldiers the

military art and every able-bodied man was required to train that he might be in readiness for any outbreak. When the crisis came in 1775, Paul Revere was not the only messenger who rode to alarm the country. Scarcely had the first shot been fired at Concord Bridge, when a rider armed with authority from one of the committee of safety in Boston, started in hot haste for the Connecticut Valley. He asked for men and from Springfield sixty-two responded. Shays' Rebellion made itself felt in Chicopee and for a time was the rallying point of one company of the insurgents. They took possession of what was then the new Chicopee bridge, but scattered in confusion when the news of Shays' defeat reached them; indeed, many fled through Chicopee streets. One found refuge and a hiding place in a secret chimney closet at Captain Ephraim Chapin's, and a sick soldier was kindly cared for at the minister's.

In 1782 the Legislature passed "an Act granting a lottery" for erecting a bridge over the Chicopee River on the road leading from Springfield to Hadley. As an apparent excuse, we are told that "much expense, difficulty and danger attend the passing of the river." The town itself appropriated two hundred pounds, but the tickets failed to sell rapidly and the town agreed to take all that were unsold for payment of all prizes. In March, 1783, when the bridge was nearly completed, the building committee complained that by spending anticipated earnings of the lottery most of the tickets remained unsold. So the town reaffirmed the agreement to take the unsold tickets.

Deacon Edward Chapin's diary has interesting entries. The first entry is on September 9, 1745, and is "A cool foggy morning." He tells us of the weather; of his hunting and farming; of the savage Indian foes and their attacks on the settlements; of his subscribing for a Boston newspaper; of the building a schooner, "The Hampshire," by the neighbors to carry their produce to market at Hartford, which makes but one successful trip and is lost, cargo and all; of the building of the meetinghouse and schoolhouse; and of the texts and sermons. On March 24, 1748/9, it is recorded: "A long spell of very muddy travelling this spring." June 9 the entry is: "This day was observed as a day of humiliation and prayer through the Province on account of the distressing drought." November 13, 1753: "About 11 o'clock in the forenoon, to the surprise of many, was heard the

report as of a large Cannon in the air and by some in Connecticut the same, an Alarm of a Drum following by the space of several minutes." May 23, 1766: "The schoolhouse in Hartford was blown up by powder." On the back of an old deed was found the following prescription: "Give a portion of the Reed root every morning for 3 mornings going; every night going to bed give him 2 or 3 spoonfuls of black water according as he can bear; on or about 11 or 12 o'clock, in the day give him a portion of Tumeric, about as much as will ly on a Shilling at a Time, and wash it down with a decoction of agrimony, Elder blooming, or Hysop."

A few colored people were held as slaves in Chicopee, but slavery was always mild in Massachusetts. Pompey and Betty, who were married, belonged to Phineas Chapin, and Cæsar to Lieutenant Japhet. Cæsar ran away. Reverend Pelatiah Chapin, Japhet's son-in-law, went in search of him, but stopped to preach and lost him again. History does not say if he was ever found.

From 1779 to 1785 there are no parish records. Meanwhile, Mr. McKinstry had been growing feeble and with loss of vigor his voice was growing weak. The young people were not coming into the church and there seems to have been general dissatisfaction. An effort was made to secure the resignation of Mr. McKinstry and one faction went so far as to close the meetinghouse. But Mr. McKinstry had been settled for life and reasonably enough was unwilling to give up his pastorate. After long discussion a council decided that the minister was to retain his parish and perform such ministerial services as the parish desired and his strength allowed. It was voted to secure as his colleague "a learned and orthodox minister." For sixty-one years Mr. McKinstry was pastor of this church, but for only thirty was he in active service.

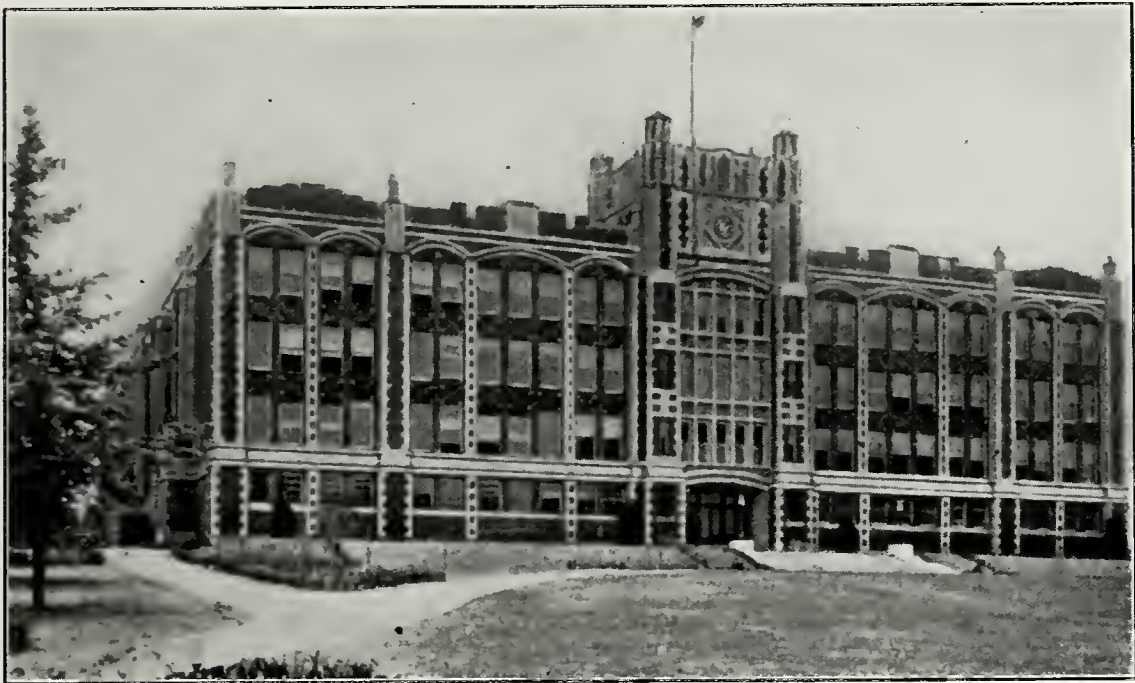
In 1796 it was "voted to hire a master to instruct in singing." This was church music and consisted of Watts' Psalms and Hymns, which were in use here very soon after they were first introduced into the country. There was a choir in the meetinghouse almost from the very first.

In 1785 Colonel Abel Chapin built the old brown house where he kept tavern for many years, hanging out under the old elm tree a sign which told of good cheer and hospitality within. The sign showed on one side haystacks and sheaves of grain and on the other side an



ox and sheep with the name "S. Chapin" in large letters underneath. When "Uncle Austin" Chapin was innkeeper there was a typhus epidemic in the village and several of his family were ill. Some men, fresh from rafting on the river, came to get the inn's refreshments, but Mr. Chapin turned them away, saying: "If you knew how sick my family are, you would not ask it." In the morning the sign was taken down and "Uncle Austin's" days of tavern keeping were over.

Family worship was almost universal at this time, as was also the custom of asking a blessing at the beginning and returning thanks at the close of the meal. In most families the Sabbath began and ended



HIGH SCHOOL, CHICOPEE

at sundown, but a few thought as did Mr. Pynchon that the Lord's Day began with the natural morning after midnight and ended with the natural evening at midnight. There were few clocks or watches, but the hour glass, sun dial and noon mark were used instead to mark the time. By the close of the century tall clocks had become common.

Homespun was the everyday dress, but most men had a Sunday suit of English broadcloth, while their wives had one or more silk dresses. Cloaks of beautiful red broadcloth were worn and occasionally one of black satin. Every young girl had her chest of bed



and table linen, blankets, coverlids, underwear and stockings, probably spun, woven and knit by her own hands. The store accumulated from year to year and was ready for her marriage when that came, or if she remained unmarried, perhaps she needed it all the more. It was called her "setting out," a quaint term to indicate the new life upon which she was entering.

The big kitchen with its great fireplace was the most attractive room in the house. The utmost care was taken to preserve the fire by covering it with ashes at night. Sometimes fire was "borrowed" from a neighbor, and there were town laws ordering that fire should always be covered when carried from house to house. Matches were unknown and every house had a tinder-box with flint and steel and scorched linen for striking fire when necessary. The warming pan was part of the furniture of every house. This was a covered brass pan with a long handle, which was filled with coals and passed between the sheets at bedtime to take off the chill.

Dipping candles was an interesting process. Under the skilled hand of the housewife they grew into the proper size and form, and when the number of dozens needed for family use was completed they were properly cooled and laid away in the candle-box.

After the death of friends it was customary to "put up a bill," as it was called, "asking the prayers of God's people, that the affliction might be sanctified to the surviving family and friends." The relatives all sat together and some who were never seen in church dared not lose their respectability by staying away at this time.

The greatest day of the year was Thanksgiving Day, for to those of Puritan ancestry Christmas was unknown. (The first time Christmas was kept in Chicopee Street was in 1867.) For weeks before Thanksgiving all the housekeeping arrangements were planned for it and the farm work was hurried up that the boys might be ready to begin school "the Monday after." New shoes, new gowns, new bonnets and hoods and cloaks were made ready, everything must be in order for the great and joyful occasion. Pies without number and in bewildering variety found their way from the fragrant big brick oven to the "buttry" shelves. The raised cake was a work of art and was always baked the week before. At least twenty-four hours were required from the making of the yeast before the beautiful brown loaves gladdened the heart of the housekeeper. Then came the Sun-

day when the proclamation was read. The minister rose in the great pulpit, opened the big printed sheet, and after reading the causes for thankfulness which the pious heart of the Governor had suggested, closed with the stirring words, "*God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.*" Hearts beat fast with pride and patriotism.

Going to meeting was a part of Thanksgiving Day. It was a reunion of friends, for children and grandchildren came to the old home to keep the day in glad remembrance. Special music was always prepared and the meetinghouse rang with psalm and anthem. The dinner table was loaded with all good things the farm could supply and the skill of the housekeeper provide. One thing that was always on the table and must not be forgotten was the chicken pie. The turkey might sometimes be left out, but the chicken pie, never!

By 1761 the number of children had increased so much as to make the old school building uncomfortable. This was taken down and what was afterward known as the "Old Red Schoolhouse" was built on the same lot. It was of two stories and fronted the south. At first there were fireplaces and later box stoves were substituted, one of them large enough to hold four-foot wood. The schoolhouse was used for a variety of purposes, prayer meetings and lectures, singing schools, debating societies, spelling matches, temperance and anti-slavery meetings, and sometimes a justice's court. In the lower room the desks were on three sides, rising by steps to the last row against the wall. Upstairs the seats and desks were movable. The oldest scholars occupied the room downstairs and the little ones the upper room. Sometimes there was a private school in the upper room for the more advanced scholars and in this room there was a globe and a prism.

For many years there were frequent changes in the teachers. A young woman taught all the scholars in the summer and the younger ones in winter. But a man, sometimes a college student, was thought necessary to govern the large boys who came in the winter.

The spelling book and the catechism were the first things studied and the Testament was the first reading book. Arithmetic was taught and fine penmanship was considered an accomplishment. Later, "The School Master's Assistant," also called "Daboll's Arithmetic," came into use and kept its place for a long time. In 1783 "Webster's Spelling Book," with its fables and wonderful pictures, entertained the

children and the next year "Morse's Geography" told most wonderful things about the world. "Peter Parley" began his story-telling about 1830, and continued it in geography and in several history books. "Emerson's Arithmetic," with its pretty pictures, was the first child's arithmetic. G. and C. Merriam had an interesting series of readers, starting with "The Easy Primer" and continuing with "The Intelligent Reader" to the "Village Reader." The "Old Red Schoolhouse" was used for more than eighty years.

For a long time the schools were opened and closed with prayer and the scholars were quietly dismissed at night, each one stopping at the door to bow or "curtsey" to the teacher. The children were expected to show the same civility to older persons whom they met in the street. This custom was continued as late as 1835, and when the stage went by the children ranged themselves in a row to "make their manners."

Wagons and carriages were not seen in Chicopee until after 1800, for everyone rode on horseback. We do not read, however, that the vehicles frightened horses as they did in Blandford, where a town meeting was called to forbid their use. Captain Phinehas was one of the first to own a chaise and Dr. Skeelee had one about the same time. Ruel Van Horn, of lower Chicopee, owned the first double carriage and drove a pair of handsome white horses.

A familiar feature of the early days was the post rider. Once a week he rode to Northampton, bringing from there the "Northampton Courier" and "Hampshire Gazette," which he distributed to subscribers along his route. Another day he brought the Springfield papers and sometimes letters and passengers. His wagon was usually well loaded with boxes and bundles for his patrons. Winter's cold or summer's heat rarely kept him from his weekly round.

The long box stove, which furnished the first heat in the church, stood near the easterly end of the audience room and had a long pipe extending across the church and turning upward toward the roof a short distance in front of the pulpit. It had a large pan attached to the knee of the pipe to catch any stray rivulets that might course down the pipe from the roof and otherwise fall on the heads of the listeners below. The story is told that some woman opposed the innovation of a stove, fearing the heat would be too oppressive. The stove, however, was put up, but for some reason no fire was built in it the first



Sabbath. This, however, was not known by the woman, who was so overcome by imaginary heat that she had to leave the church during service.

The choir was seated in the gallery and before the last bell ceased ringing old Mr. Goodman, with his big bass viol, would leave his little red house across the street and with slow, dignified tread enter the church and climb the stairway. Then he proceeded to tune his instrument and awaken divers wondrous noises from its recesses, until at last the right sounds were evoked and he was ready to accompany the choir. For a long time it was customary for the congregation to turn around in their pews to face the singers in the rear gallery. The pastor suggested that a change be made and the congregation face the minister instead of the choir during the singing, but all did not readily accept this new idea, with the result that some faced one way and some another.

The Methodist Church at the Falls was organized about 1825 and the Baptist Church three years later. The Catholics commenced holding services in a house close to the river, which has since been washed away. In thirteen years, between 1835 and 1848, there were seven churches built in the village of Cabotville. Every denomination at some period in its early existence held services in Chapin Hall, but never together. The first Episcopalians that came to Chicopee were called "very good people, but Episcopalians." The Universalists and Unitarians took the lead in many a good work, but they were "Universalists and Unitarians." It is said that one minister prayed that the Universalist Church might be carried by a high wind, "shingle by shingle, into yonder river." The Baptists thought the river the only place to administer baptism. The Congregationalists were called "blue orthodox" and the hill on which their church was built was called Brimstone Hill.

A stagecoach began to run through the village and before 1830 was carrying the mail. The yellow coach with its four horses was the most elegant conveyance imaginable, and how the children envied the people who found it convenient or necessary to travel in that luxurious manner. At first one coach was sufficient, but in the years just before the building of the Connecticut River Railroad three or four crowded stages passed daily.



At the time of the Civil War, Soldiers' Aid societies were formed and the needs of the soldiers found a ready response. Lint and bandages were prepared; apples dried; comfortable garments for the sick and wounded made ready; garrets and closets were ransacked and coverlids and blankets sent to the army. Reverend E. B. Clark, the pastor at this time, was very public-spirited. He cared for the parsonage, planted shade trees and served on the school committee.

When the news of the fall of Richmond came to Chicopee, Marshall Pease was the first to hear it. He rushed to the church and rang a peal of joy on the old bell. That roused Mr. Clark, who came hurrying to know the cause of this midday ringing. "Richmond is fallen," Mr. Pease shouted. "Then let us sing the Doxology," said Mr. Clark, and there in the old church the two sang "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

It was during Mr. Clark's pastorate that the Underground Railroad ran through Chicopee Street, with stations at various houses. Mr. Clark was glad to be of assistance on this line and at one time kept in his family for several weeks a bright and valuable colored man who was in hiding from his master.

The first librarian in Chicopee was William L. Bemis, who remained in that position until 1841. He was most careful and exact in his care of the books and covered them all with white cotton cloth. At one time a number of anti-slavery books were put in the library and these were all marked with a big black A. The list of books was varied, but rather solid, and included volumes of sermons, meditations, essays, memoirs and histories. "The Ladies' Library," one volume, plainly catered to the fair sex and "Robinson Crusoe" must have gladdened the heart of many a boy. When the library was established is unknown now, but its end was recorded by John McKinstry when on June 21, 1834, Chicopee auctioned their library and "forsook the tree of knowledge."

The town has had many industries since the first sawmill was built by Gad, Luther and Azariah Van Horn, assisted by six Chapins and other men. Boots and shoes were made and sent to Hartford and New York and powder and brick were manufactured. The first friction matches in this country, and perhaps in the world, were made here in 1835. Two large two-horse wagons went out over the State, taking orders and delivering the goods. Deacon Sidney Chapin made brooms

in Chicopee Street for twenty-five years, sending them as far away as Georgia in the South and to London, England. At times he turned out thirty thousand brooms a year. The broom corn was raised by the farmers all through the valley and many a boy had the "itch" while stripping the seeds from the tops. No fields of the tall waving plumes are now to be seen in the region and the manufacturer must send to Oklahoma for it.

The beginning of manufacturing really took place in 1786 when ten Chicopee men leased to James Byers and William Smith of Springfield "two acres of land and the water privilege on the south side of Chicopee River at Skenungonuck Falls." The conditions of the lease required that within two years they should be ready to manufacture hollow ironware. The ore to supply the furnace was taken from the south bank of the river, about eighty rods above the present dam at the falls and at other places. The ore was very "lean," but a little went a long ways then. Benjamin Belcher later bought the whole business and in turn sold it to Jonathan and Edmund Dwight. The property consisted of a blast furnace and nearly all of the land where now stands the village of Chicopee Falls. One of the fine things the Dwight brothers did for Chicopee was to plant elm trees along many of the principal streets. Mill streets were treated the same as residence streets and many of the magnificent trees of the city were due to their thoughtfulness.

The water privilege on the north side of the river was sold to William Bowman and Benjamin and Samuel Cox, who manufactured paper there for fifteen years. The Chicopee Manufacturing Company later acquired the water right. In 1822 the Dwight brothers acquired land and water power at Chicopee Falls and the Boston and Springfield Manufacturing Company was organized soon after.

The Springfield Canal Company was started in 1831, when much of the present city was still swamps and bushes. When George Prayer drove the stake where the upper end of the canal was to be, John Chase, agent for the company, said: "You can tell people you were the man who drove the stake for a new Lowell." The building of the canal brought the Irish to Cabotville. They were paid seventy-five cents a day and three "jiggers" or drinks. A dam across the Chicopee River, and the canal, one-third of a mile in length, were completed in 1832. Mr. Chase surveyed and laid out the lands of the

Canal Company with a view to securing the greatest number of corner lots possible.

As one mill after another was built, their completion was celebrated by balls to which came everyone from far and near. Mr. Chase and his wife were fine dancers and generally opened the ball. They also had what were called "lighting up" and "blowing out" balls, which were the events of the season. The mills were lighted between September 20 and March 20, and balls at the beginning and ending were in order. The opening of these mills and shops called many of Mr. Chase's friends from New Hampshire, his native State, and they were hard workers. John Denison spent most of his life in the town and teamed for the company. He carried goods to and from Boston and other cities and once he nearly met with a fatal accident in crossing the Connecticut River on the ice with his loaded team. The ice gave way and he lost his goods, but was fortunate enough to save himself and his horses. Just as typhoid fever ravaged "The Patch" in Holyoke at the time of the building of the dam, so did "Cabot fever" run through Cabotville in 1839. On one day nine lay unburied in the small village.

The First National Bank of Chicopee began its existence in 1845 with John Chase as president. Someone who had a spite against him once instigated a run on the bank by collecting all the claims against the bank that he possibly could and presenting them for gold payment. He instigated others to do the same and the situation became serious. Finally, "Uncle John" dressed himself in old clothes to avoid recognition, was driven to Springfield in the evening and took the train to New York. No one knew that he had gone except Gilbert Walker, the cashier. He came back the next night and walked up from Springfield with a bag of gold on each arm. This successfully stopped the run.

The Dwight Company bought the property of the Cabot Company and the Perkins mills in 1856 and absorbed all cotton manufacturing interests. When cotton manufacturing was begun in Chicopee it was under difficulties. All the raw material and the finished product had to be transported by team or by equally slow water navigation. Sperm oil lamps furnished the only artificial light. The operatives had to work fourteen hours a day and the pay was small.



Deacon Silas Mosman and his sons were workers in the Ames shops, which manufactured cutlery. This company made the fine presentation swords of General Grant, General Butler and others, costing \$2,000 each. Among their notable works are the handsome bronze doors made for the Capitol at Washington and costing \$57,000. The Ames Company cast the equestrian statues of Washington in the Boston Public Gardens and Union Square, New York City; the Lincoln monument at Springfield, Illinois; and that of Benjamin Franklin placed in front of the Boston City Hall. To the unveiling of this the Ames workmen went on a special train. Bells were also cast for public buildings, among them the New York City Hall bell, which was six feet high and weighed over 8,000 pounds, and the Episcopal Church bell in Hartford. During the Civil War a force of over seven hundred men worked day and night making cannons, swords and sabres. Some of the Ames military output was sold abroad to France, England and Turkey. Nathan P. Ames, Jr., happened to come to Chicopee because he and Edmund Dwight chanced to be the only passengers one night on a coach to Boston. There was a midnight supper and a change of horses in Springfield as Ames was returning from a tour of the country and Mr. Dwight, before morning, had made a contract with Ames to furnish him a shop, machinery and water power, without rent at the beginning, if he would come to Chicopee.

The Ames brothers were men of great genius, untiring energy and high Christian character, and their influence on the early life of Chicopee cannot be too highly estimated. They were always ready to assist any project that would benefit Chicopee and were among the leaders in business, social and religious life for many years.

Richard B. Inshaw came from New York to Cabotville about 1836 to take charge of the fine engraving for the N. P. Ames Company. He was fond of sports and hunting and is said to have kept forty-five sporting dogs at one time. He had rare birds and other choice animals about his cottage and he and his wife both enjoyed entertaining visitors.

The Connecticut River Railroad was opened from Springfield to Northampton with a station at Cabotville on December 13, 1845. A branch railroad was opened to Chicopee Falls the next year. The



increased business brought a dense population to the Chicopee River region.

In 1848 they petitioned the Legislature to set off a separate town to include Cabotville, Chicopee Street and Willimansett by the name of Cabot. On April 25, 1848, the Legislature voted to set off from the town of Springfield the territory including the villages of Cabotville, Chicopee Falls, Chicopee Street and Willimansett as the new town of Chicopee.

The name Chicopee is an Indian word variously written on old records and different meanings are given to it by historians. Some claim it means the "River of Elms," another that it probably comes from the word "Chikee," meaning it rages or is violent, and the word "pe," meaning water. Other versions spell it Chickuppe, meaning cedar country water; Checkoby, violent water; or Chikabee.

Willimansett is also given variety in spelling, as follows: Willimansit, Wollomansit, Willimansitseep. The name Cabotville was used about 1850 because the Boston Cabot family had put so much capital into the mills.

Skipmuck or Skipmaug, the section about a mile up the river from Chicopee Falls, is said to mean overflowed fishing place.

Town officers were elected at the first meeting, appropriations made for schools and the new town went in debt to purchase a "poor farm." The town hall, with its imposing tower and great bell, was built in 1871.

The first attempt to get a bridge built between Willimansett and Holyoke was made in 1857 and from then until it was completed, in 1893, there was an intermittent battle between the two places. The struggle began in earnest in 1886, when \$400 was subscribed to further the project and the matter was carried to the Legislature, which seemed sympathetic. Lawyer W. H. Brooks, of Holyoke, gallantly protected Willimansett's desire to have the bridge erected where the present bridge stands, while Chicopee's array of talent that argued for having it farther down the river included Ex-Governor Robinson, the famous local lawyer George M. Stearns, and Ex-Mayor McClench. When the Act ordering the building of the bridge was passed, Willimansett had a wild celebration and Stratton and Eldridge, two men who had worked hard to get the measure through,

were drawn about the village in a carriage by the jubilant populace. The completion of the bridge was also grandly celebrated.

A railroad bridge with a footpath on one side had been in use for some time before the new bridge was built and a toll of two cents was charged each person on week days, but Sundays they might pass free to church in Holyoke. Orange Chapin Towne was station agent at one time and the method for taking freight from the cotton mills on the Holyoke side of the river was to board a freight train, load up the car and trust to the grade to bring it back again to the Willimansett side. The railroad station was a schoolhouse originally.

The late Governor George Dexter Robinson came to Chicopee in 1856 as principal of the high school immediately after his graduation from Harvard College and then studied law in his brother's office in Cambridge. He returned to Chicopee and entered upon a career in the courts and in politics which has made his legal abilities respected and his name widely known.

The first Baptist Church was organized in Chicopee Falls and accommodated members of that faith from South Hadley Falls and Willimansett. Beulah Chapel was the first Baptist church in Willimansett and was built in 1888. Reverend Edward Smith Ufford, its first pastor after organization as a church in 1893, was widely known by his famous song, "Throw Out the Life Line," a favorite of Moody and Sankey. His "bicycle sermons" attracted much attention as well as his lecture on "Darkest London," illustrated with calcium lights.

A fire in 1872 partially destroyed the Grace Episcopal Church building and it was not rebuilt until 1885. The parish house was opened in 1893 and was continuously available day and night, except during the time of services on Sunday. There was a smoking room and pool tables, a gymnasium and showers. Outside sports were carried on in their season and one rector, the Reverend Newton Black, inaugurated a camp for boys on Shepherd's Island in the Connecticut River opposite Northampton. He had a fleet of canoes in which the boys paddled up the river to the camp, where during their two weeks' stay they lived an open air life free from clothing and undue restraint. Group after group in succeeding years fished and swam and paddled and learned to live squarely. So unusual was the atmosphere created by the little rector that "Mr. Black's boys" stood for honesty and

trustworthiness wherever they came in contact with the country people. Many of them have come back as grown men to visit Mr. Black who, forty years later, still paddles to "The Island."

The first daguerreotype taken in the United States was taken in Chicopee by A. S. Southworth. An exhibition of them was displayed in Boston on the day that Harrison was inaugurated as President in 1841.

Many a boy and man knew Chicopee because of the Victor bicycle made by the Overman Wheel Company. They claimed that their factory was the only bicycle plant in the world where a complete bicycle was made from handle bars to tire. Other manufacturers put money into racing machines for advertising purposes, but the Overman Company kept men on wheels day after day for testing purposes only. They invented the "dynamometer" to measure the power required to drive a bicycle.

As boys knew Chicopee because of the Victor bicycle, so did farmers know it as the home of the Belcher and Taylor Company, makers of agricultural tools. The "Yankee Blade," a patented feed cutter, was made by Bildad B. Belcher and two other men in 1852. A corn sheller came next and then a set of plow patterns was bought. The famous Lion plow, the cylinder plow and the conical plow followed. The Bullard Tedder rights were bought as well as several kinds of rakes. A disc harrow, called the "Yankee Pulverizer," was a popular implement, and later the manufacturer felt that he was giving the farmer an easy life when he produced the sulky plow. One hundred and ninety different sizes and styles of plows were at one time or another on the lists of this company and twelve styles of feed cutters, of which they probably sold more than any other manufacturer in the world.

An outstanding Chicopee citizen was George M. Stearns, one of the ablest, wittiest, and best loved of American lawyers. He was the son of a hill-town minister and such was his boyhood reputation that he was called "the parson's devil." His father was a fine scholar, with a nature that was abstracted and mild, and he lived much more in the world of his own thought and studies than in that close about him. Stearns used to say:

"When I was a little fellow I could crawl around, over him, dance on the table, straddle his neck—anything—and it was all right so long as I didn't tip over his inkstand.



"In the course of time I arrived at the age of seventeen and the question came up as to how I was going to make a living in the world. I'd got to do something.

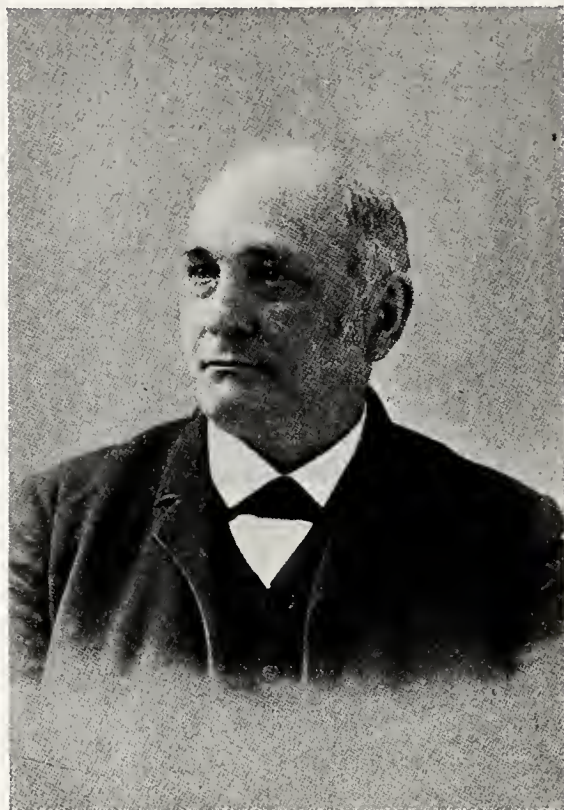
"My father was poor and there was no getting rid of the necessity I had to pitch hay, dig potatoes and fork manure—and none of these things exactly suited me for a life work. Of the outside world I knew very little, but I often rode with my father and had been in Greenfield a number of times. To my youthful fancy Greenfield was the hub of the universe, and I didn't suppose it rested with ordinary mortals to see a larger or more important place. In Greenfield were several lawyers of my father's acquaintance, and it always seemed to me they had the finest houses and best turnouts, and in fact, the softest job. Therefore, I thought the law was what was best suited to me. My father sometimes took boys who wished to get a better education than could be had locally and gave them such aid as fitted them to enter college. Among those who came to him were John and Royal Wells. John started a law office in Chicopee. He was a good boy and he was a good man. If he had temptations, he never gave way to them; and in my opinion he was so good he didn't have temptations anyway. When I made known to my folks a wish to be a lawyer, they said, 'We'll send you to John Wells.' They at least were sure I would be carefully looked after. So in August, 1848, I made my advent into Chicopee and swept the office and received a salary of fifty dollars a year. When I came to Chicopee it had a population of about eight thousand and the small brick dwellings along Exchange Street were occupied by the solid residents of the village.

"There were no sidewalks except in front of two or three of the stores. None of the residential streets had any and the man who laid out a gravelled path in front of his house was thought to be rather high-toned and pretentious. Dirt paths straggled along the wayside and on occasion a board was laid down in the early spring to prevent your going knee deep in the mud.

"Manufacturing was chiefly represented by three cotton mills that flanked a canal on the borders of the Chicopee River



and never has there been a handsomer set of women than those who used to work in our mills here. They were well educated, well behaved Yankee country girls. No sooner did I start in earnest at the law office than with the eager foolishness of a boy to do a man's work I went rattling around picking up all sorts of jobs to get my hand in. I would take every case possible and at any price. If a man had no money, I would do the work for nothing, because I at least got the prac-



GEORGE W. STEARNS

tice. We had some great legal fights here and things were kept hot and interesting. I used to have some of the liveliest bouts with a young lawyer named Severance—and a smart, quick-witted fellow he was.

"When it was known that he and I were to cross swords in a case, standing room couldn't be bought in the justice's office. A curious phase of the matter was that every lawyer in town had his own justice and was dead sure from the beginning to win any case he chose to

bring before him. You might sue a man for tipping over the city hall and the decision would be in your favor.

"The Irish were just beginning to come to town and the place was full of fights. There was a curious clannish division among the immigrants and the man from County Kerry would lick the first man he met from County Clare, or try to; the O'Briens would fight the O'Tooles, and so on. One family—the Higgins—won special fame. They could lick all

the other families in town. In one fight there were fifteen or twenty engaged on each side. About a bushel of hair was gathered on the spot after the fracas and a teacupful of teeth. The case made lots of work for the court. It lasted three or four days. In the midst of the trial two of the women concerned caught each other by the hair and swung around the room in a most furious fashion. It took ten minutes to separate them and get their teeth out of each other and disengage their hands from one another's hair.

"One rather funny incident that I recall has to do with a little Irish boy who pumped the organ at the Unitarian Church. William McClellan was the organist and it was a great wonder to the little shaver at the pump handle how the music was made. One Sunday, in the middle of the voluntary, he filled the bellows full and tiptoed to the corner to peek round and see William's fingers 'go it.' But the wind soon began to give out and the music wavered and threatened to collapse. William, puzzled to know what the matter was, looked up and saw his pumper sticking up his head around the corner. The boy was all excitement. 'Give it to 'em on the high notes!' he exclaimed in a thrilling whisper. 'Give it to 'em on the high notes!'

"William's father, Captain McClellan, had charge of the water works and the organ boy's father, Arthur Burns, got a job with him. Burns was a bright, capable fellow, but he used to get tight once in a while and one day when he went to Worcester on the captain's business he came home drunk. Captain McClellan wouldn't have anyone around who drank and Burns had as good as lost his situation. However, the next day he was on hand as usual and by and by put his head in at the office door.

"'Good morning, Captain,' was his greeting, delivered in his blindest way, and then he proceeded to explain the Worcester affair.

"'I got off the train,' he said, 'and went two blocks south and then I turned to the left and walked up one street and at the next corner a wind struck me from the north that cold it

'u'd freeze a man to dith in no time. And, sir, what did I do? I see a saloon, just before me, and I had the prisince of mind to go right in and take a drink. It saved me life.'

"One time William said to Burns: 'Well, how many of you were out last night?' 'Four,' Burns said, 'there were four of us.' 'Who were they?' William inquired. And Burns answered: 'The two Crogans was one, myself was two, Mike Finn was three, and—and—who was four? Let me see, and he counted on his fingers as he continued: 'The two Crogans was one, Mike Finn was two, myself was three, and, bedad! there was four of us, but I couldn't tell the name of the other. Now it's myself that has it. Mike Finn was one, the two Crogans was two, myself was three—and—by me soul! I think there was but three of us after all.'

"Well, there have been great changes within my recollection. The first time I went to Boston I traveled in a chaise with a trunk strapped to the axle underneath. The second time I went on the cars—rude affairs with narrow seats and a loose-hung strip of hair cloth for a back. But by contrast that manner of traveling was princely and it didn't seem right to enjoy such luxury. Yet steam power has not been wholly a benefit. Modern smoke and smudge and clatter have made the nymphs, fairies and woodland gods of simple times a fading fancy. Cities have been built and big mills filled with crowding life, but the country villages have been depopulated.

"It has the look as if New England's hills and plains were to become just grazing ground for cattle, while the population all concentrates in the hurrying manufacturing cities."

Stearns in his maturer years as a lawyer always drew a crowd when he had a case in court. He has been described as "short, round and as genial as an old-fashioned stage driver."

He was unassuming, showed a marked disregard for conventionalities and was wholly without trace of conceit or arrogance. His smooth-shaven face had a humorous, quizzical expression and he was noted for his abounding good nature and keen sense of the ludicrous. His head was pushed down between his shoulders and he was of a build that took the symmetry out of any suit in a little while. He



was slow in his movements and to see him wearing his wide-brimmed black slouch hat and an unpretentious suit of brown or gray, a stranger might well think he was an old-time second-class minister.

In summer he wore a linen duster—a light, long, buff-colored coat, which he pulled right on over his other clothes. Most men wore one then. Some protection was needed as the roads were so dusty. Stearns would put on his just as he was leaving home, hoping the rest of his clothing would be at least fairly clean when he arrived at his office. Also, he would have a bandanna handkerchief tied around his neck.

He was a philosopher full of sweetness and light. “The Sage of Chicopee” he was called, and listening to him was a pleasure to anyone not on the opposite side. He assumed a rustic drawl in embellishing his witty sallies, which were clean and hearty and never malicious. His humor bubbled and sparkled incessantly and broke out at the most unexpected times. His speech abounded in tenderness and fine feeling and rarely has there been an attorney who could so quickly and surely swing a jury from tears of sentiment to tears of laughter.

His illustrations were striking enough to be understood by the dullest mind among the chance hangers-on at the courts where he practiced, homely enough to appeal to the humblest farmers drawn to serve as jurymen, ingenious enough to interest his fellow-lawyers, and appropriate enough, no matter how unconventional, to be allowed by the judge. His pleas were works of art. Wit, pathos, argument, joke, story and logic followed each other in a torrent and the whole court room audience would come under the spell of his eloquence. Stearns was called the outstanding lawyer of western Massachusetts. Tales of his pleas used to be as plentiful as butterflies in June.

An early name for an important section of Chicopee was Cabotville, so-called from one of its founders, and the local militia in the middle of the last century took to itself the title of the “Cabot Guards.” Stearns used to say: “One of my earliest recollections is of the old Cabot Guards, on the occasion of their annual muster, rolling around here in search of blood and other drink.”

They did their part in enlivening the town and Stearns did his, though in ways rather more original. He and Severance, another young lawyer, engaged in a curious escapade one Sunday. They went up the street about noon to where two fair sized elm trees stood on



opposite sides of the way. Stearns climbed into one and Severance into the other and when the good people were walking home from meeting they heard voices up in the elm trees. Those two lawyers were going on as if they had a breach of promise case in court. They were shouting their arguments back and forth across the street, and the case evidently involved some of the local residents, because they were calling people's names right out. It was too funny for anything. Stearns and Severance were pretty wild young men and they were looked at cross-eyed by many of the Chicopee townsfolk.

Once when the question of ministers' salaries was being discussed at a Unitarian convention Stearns was asked for his opinion and he said:

"I believe a minister should receive a salary that would enable him to have enough wholesome food so he will be properly nourished. If he's obliged to live on canned goods you can't expect to get anything from him but canned goods sermons. We had a preacher at our church one Sunday who was a lean, cadaverous sort of a man and looked as if he had never had a square meal and wouldn't know how to enjoy a square meal if he did have one. The morning sermon was as lean as the parson looked and the text was to the effect that we are nothing but groveling worms of the dust. Well, it was very pessimistic and depressing. I invited him to be my guest for the day. He was a young fellow and I knew by the sparkle of his eyes that he had something in him. We had a good dinner and how that man did eat! In the afternoon he took a nap while I hitched up the old gray mare and my wife and I went for a ride. Later, we gave the minister a good supper and you ought to have seen the transformation in the man when he appeared in the pulpit that evening. We didn't get any dismal preaching from him either. He took for his text 'God created man in his own image little lower than the angels.' The fact is you can't get good work from a minister any more than you can from a horse unless you provide the means for his being comfortably housed and well nourished."

Stearns was a pillar of the church that he attended and often entertained visiting ministers. One such—a gentle, hungry-looking soul—

was present at dinner, when a large fish was the main feature of the menu. In response to an inquiry if he would have some of the fish, he replied in a highly elegant manner that must have rejoiced Mr. Stearns' mother: "I will thank you for a small portion."

His words amused his host very much and he received what unquestionably was a small portion. It didn't last long and then Mr. Stearns urged him to have more of the fish. Back came his plate with the same polite "I will thank you for a small portion."

This time also his words were interpreted literally and the serving of "small portions" continued until nothing was left of the fish but a huge bony framework. Again Mr. Stearns pressed him to have more, and again this called forth the stilted acceptance. Then Madame Stearns watched with horrified eyes while her son placed the entire skeleton on the minister's plate. The host's little granddaughter was likewise watching, but not in horror. She left the table hurriedly to laugh in peace.

Madame Stearns never forgave her son for this escapade. Such treatment of a minister was beyond her comprehension. After the dinner she had a long and earnest talk with the clergyman and did her utmost to make an apologetic explanation.

Her sense of humor was very attenuated. The only jokes that were acceptable to her were those that her church paper, the "Christian Register," published in a column styled "Pleasantries." At these she laughed tolerantly, but the same jokes from another source found no response. She spent much time in her later years in efforts to guard people from her son's wit, or in trying to soften the impact of it by careful explanation. "George really doesn't mean that," was a comment she often made after one of his humorous conversational extravagances.

Simple pleasures appealed to Stearns most and he pursued them with a childlike frankness. One of these pleasures was the owning and driving a good horse and the attraction that horses had for him led to his buying steeds of widely varied pedigrees and values. His ownership usually was limited to one at a time, which he kept in a stable back of his house. He was a familiar figure on the road between Chicopee and Springfield driving to and from business. His vehicle was a big, broad buggy, comfortable but plain, and not in the least spruced up and constructed in such a fashion that it swayed like a boat.

People used to prophesy that some day he would be spilled out of his buggy, his method of driving was so easy-going. He always drove with very loose reins, and when he wanted to stop he had to lean way back to take up the slack. When he wanted to speed up a little he pulled on the reins and the horse knew what that meant. He never kept a horse if it showed any signs of shying, which was fortunate, because one that couldn't be trusted would have been fatal for such a driver.

But though he insisted on having safety in a horse's temperament and habits, his chief delight was speed, and he often went dashing along the highway at a pace that would put him in jail today. He used to say, "They don't know how to build a crosswalk in Chicopee." You see he drove so fast that when he went over a crosswalk he always got jounced.

Among Stearns' admirers was a boy named William McClench, later president of the Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company, and they lived on the same street. That was before Chicopee had a fire alarm system and when anyone discovered a fire he'd begin to holler. Mr. McClench said:

"Again and again I've gone to the door in the evening thinking I heard somebody crying 'Fire!' and found that it was Stearns driving home after court from Springfield and shouting 'Lantern! Lantern!' as he approached his house. Maurice, his coachman and man-of-all-work, was somewhere on the premises expecting him, and Stearns wanted him to be out in the yard with a light when he drove in.

"He would start speeding at the top of the hill some distance from his home. If he was returning in the daytime his announcing shout was likely to be addressed to his wife in the words: 'Em! I'm coming, Em!'

"Mr. Stearns was my ideal of a lawyer, and soon after I graduated from college I saw him drive into his yard one night and stepped over to speak to him. I asked him if I could study law in his office.

"'Of course you can, William,' he said. And that led to an intimate association with him, the memory of which I always shall treasure."



Stearns bought a victoria for Mrs. Stearns. It was a beautiful vehicle of the very latest design. Maurice, the hired man, was to sit on the high front seat and drive and she could go out any time she chose. They rigged him up in a coachman's uniform, but he didn't look the part and he objected to wearing such duds. Mrs. Stearns didn't enjoy the victoria either. She would rather ride with George, and that meant going in the buggy, for he had to use something he could speed in. They rode a good deal together and she got along very well if her bonnet strings were tied tight enough so that in a sudden spurt the bonnet didn't flop down on the back of her neck or over an ear.

He was likely to drive up to the door and take her out for a ride in the early morning of a day when he had an important case in court. I suppose he thought about the case some and the ride put him in proper trim to do his best.

One horse Stearns invested in was a silver-tail buckskin that he called Brimstone Maid, she acted so. He sold her to a tinsmith, but she wasn't any better suited to the tinsmith than she was to Stearns, for almost the first thing she did after the change in ownership was to run away with a load of stoves.

Stearns owned some really fine horses. Those he acquired he made pets of and lucky was the trotter that captured his favor. Now and then one like Calamity, or the gray mare Maud, won a permanent place in his affection. Calamity could trot a mile in less than two-forty and it took a good horse to do that in those days.

Maud pleased him because she would take care of herself on the road. He used to say, "I'd just as soon put the reins down round the whip when I'm driving her."

He pensioned Maud in his will by leaving fifteen hundred dollars for the care of her. She was never again to have saddle, bridle, harness or shoes on her, and when she got infirm and so old she couldn't eat, she was to be put humanely out of the way. At length that time came. She had been staying on what Stearns used to call his "farm"—a suburban place of a few acres that he acquired for his hired man to live on—and there she was shot and buried.

Just north of the thickly settled part of Springfield was a long, straight, level stretch of road in the Brightwood section, and thither the local men who owned speedy horses resorted on every pleasant



afternoon, when the traveling was good, to exercise their trotters and race with one another. There was about a mile of that straight road, with open field and pastures on each side separated from the highway by a substantial post and rail fence. A crowd always gathered to look on and the fence served the onlookers for seats. The horsemen used to start at the north end near the foot of Rockrimmon Hill and how they would holler and yell coming down the course! They had some good hot races and if they were going neck and neck at the end of a mile they might keep on clear to Memorial Church Square. When they turned round they'd walk their horses back to kind of rest 'em up.

In winter they'd be out there with their sleighs. One or two winters they raced on the river, but it wasn't easy to get down and up the bank and keeping a clear track on the ice cost too much.

A good many driving horses grazed during the summer in a big Chicopee pasture on the hill where the high school is now, and every Sunday morning there'd be a bunch of the owners there to talk horse and look over their steeds.

Stearns used to illustrate his and Henry Harris' trading habits by telling the following lion story:

"Barnum's circus showed up at Hampden Park one day and Harris was on hand to see what there was to see. He was very much taken with a big shaggy-headed lion in one of the cages. 'That lion seems very good natured,' Harris said to the keeper.

" 'Yes, he's a pet,' the keeper said, 'and clever, too. Come on into the cage with me and see what a fine fellow he is.'

"So Harris went into the cage and patted the lion and walked around him to view him from all sides. The more he saw of him the better he liked him, and a great longing came over Harris to own that lion. 'Would you sell him?' he asked the keeper.

" 'Why, yes; I don't know but we would,' the keeper said. 'It's getting toward the end of the season.'

" 'What's your price?' Harris inquired, and, being a horse-man, he looked in the lion's mouth to see his teeth and get an idea of his age.

"‘A couple of thousand dollars,’ the keeper answered.

"‘You deliver him at my barn in Chicopee and I’ll take him,’ Harris said.

"The keeper agreed and Harris paid the two thousand. Late in the day the lion arrived. So Harris had him put in a box stall and he spent all the evening playing with the lion and feeding him.

"He didn’t get to bed very early and he didn’t get up very early, and when he did get up there seemed to be considerable going on out in his stable, judging from the noise. He went to investigate and as he opened the door—r-r-r-r! whang!—the lion roared and made a dash against the bars of the box stall. Harris stepped toward the stall and the lion let loose another of his thunderous roars and made another dash. This sort of thing soon convinced Harris that what the lion wanted was him and he looked anxiously out of the stable door.

"Just then I happened to be walking down the street. I heard the roars and the crashing and turned into the yard. ‘Hello, George! come in here,’ Harris called to me.

"‘What have you got in there?’ says I.

"‘A lion,’ Harris replied. ‘I bought him yesterday of Bar-num’s circus for two thousand dollars.’

"‘He doesn’t seem to be very good tempered,’ says I.

"‘He’s a devil,’ Harris declared fervently.

"‘Want to sell him?’ I asked.

"‘Yes,’ Harris said. ‘You can have him for two dollars.’

"‘And the price was so ridiculous that I had to take him.’”

A while after this lion story had been circulated Harris said to Stearns: “I want you to come and look at my new hoss. Somebody has made me a present of one.”

They went to Harris’ barn and when Harris opened up a stall and said, “There’s the hoss,” Stearns got one of the surprises of his life. The “hoss” was an old fat hog with a halter on and tied just like a horse to the manger.

Word was passed around that Harris had acquired some unusual sort of pony. Curiosity was aroused and many people came to see it

—even those from far enough away so they hitched into a buggy and drove.

In a letter written in February, 1892, Mr. Stearns says: "I am an uncomely cripple as a result of the inflictions of that horniest, hoofiest and most viciously-tailed devil of all the gang, the gout."

He suffered a good deal from these inflictions in later life and to ease the pain often sat with his foot on a stool. Gout was one reason why he played solitaire. Playing that was an aid to forgetfulness of pain and also of business. He used to say: "This is all that saves my life. If I didn't have my solitaire I'd go crazy."

You see he'd been studying all through the day over his law cases until his brain was fagged out. He couldn't have lain down and slept. When he was nervously tired like that he had to sit up and do something that was quieting.

He knew four games of solitaire and these he had been taught by as many different persons. One of them he learned from Moody Ferry and another from Elizabeth Skinner.

Stearns named each of his solitaire games after the person who taught it to him and he used to talk to the game he was playing as if it were a living companion. "Now, old Moody Ferry, come on," he'd say. Or he'd say: "Liz Skinner, you'll have to show a little more speed. It's getting to be the old man's bedtime."

Every evening he played all four games and if they chanced to be unduly prolonged he would hasten the end by drawing one, two or three cards—three was the limit.

On one occasion, while the solitaire was in progress, a visitor of the skinflint variety dropped in and tried to get certain legal information by adroitly leading the conversation in a direction that allowed the asking of a carefully prepared hypothetical question. But Stearns wasn't to be caught that way. He was seeking mental relaxation and he was very jealous of being interrupted. He kept right on playing and turned aside attempts to discuss business by talking about the game, but he was perfectly sweet, amiable and polite about it. As soon as the visitor left, however, he turned round to the members of his family and said, "That fellow came in to get something for nothing, and the old man fooled him."

Sometimes he pursued similar tactics with reporters who were insistent on getting opinions from him that he did not care to give.

One peculiar thing about Stearns at the Hampden Park races was that he wore an overcoat, for which there really was no occasion at that season of the year. He even had the collar turned up. It was just a manifestation of the habit he had of coddling himself.

Once when he wasn't feeling well and was spending a day or two at home in bed, his friend, Attorney William H. Brooks, came to see him. After the call was over and Brooks was on his way out, Mrs. Stearns said to him, "Mr. Brooks, just look here," and opened the door of a large closet.

It was amply provided with shelves and the shelves were filled with bottles of patent medicines. Stearns used to imagine he had all sorts of diseases—sometimes one and sometimes another—and if he saw a medicine advertised to cure whatever disease he fancied he had at the moment he would go and buy it. Then he would take it a little while and if it didn't have any effect he would let it alone and try a different remedy. Those shelves of patent medicines illustrated a very curious trait in a man of Stearns' mental caliber.

None of the medicines gave him much satisfaction. He grew worse and gradually relinquished his law work. One day he asked another lawyer to sit at his side while he tried a case. "My heart is troubling me," he explained, "and I don't know as I can pull through." When the time came to make the plea to the jury he said to his colleague: "You'll have to argue this. I'm not able." That was his last case.

He soon dropped work entirely and gave his whole attention to the recovery of his health. But nobody took this very seriously, because if he had a cold or other little ailment he generally made considerable talk about it. Really, he was in a condition that was critically enfeebled, and failing strength led to his transferring his home to Brookline, near Boston, in November, 1894.

That he should leave his old home was a tragedy. He was a genial and loyal friend, and a courteous and considerate host. He was devoted to his family and his affections and ambitions centered in that big, rambling house at Chicopee. It was the most delightful place in the world to him and he always left it with reluctance. He was no lover of society in the fashionable sense, and he preferred to see friends at his house rather than go to theirs. He hated restraint and conventionality and wanted freedom to live his life in his own way;



and the chief essential of that was keeping close to his home and his wife in his accustomed surroundings.

So Stearns was a sorry man when he sold his Chicopee home, and scarcely had the deal been made when he offered considerable more than he had received in an unsuccessful effort to buy back the place. The ties that bound him to it were such that probably no other could have been home to him.

One of the newspapers noted as a reason for his going that he was "afflicted with rheumatism, bronchitis, and a large and varied assortment of other diseases." Another paper remarked, "Why a man in ill health should leave the Connecticut Valley and hie himself to the east winds of Boston is an unanswerable conundrum—one of the eccentricities of genius, which there is no explaining."

Just before his departure he said:

"A person with my sensitive bronchial tubes and rheumatic tendencies can have no good health in the neighborhood of the Connecticut River bottoms. I am coughing all night and aching all day. If I do not find the change as agreeable to me as I expect, I shall take my wife and a tooth brush and start for some other clime."

He thought he would discover ways to occupy and amuse himself in Boston and he wanted to be near his Boston physician. Besides, he had an idea that he could have a horse at Brookline and get out to ride every day all winter, for the roads there would be cleared of snow when they would be difficult or impassible in the Chicopee region.

After he was settled in his new abode he was inclined to be optimistic and said in a period of buoyancy: "My old home was damp, while here the sunshine follows me all the day long." But he became terribly homesick. He remarked rather wistfully to a former neighbor who called on him: "The stars don't look quite the same as they did from my old home in Chicopee." When this former neighbor asked him what he would most like to see, he replied, "I'd rather see a piece of Chicopee sky than anything else."

All who knew him shared his hope that he would be benefited by the change of surroundings, but he steadily lost in strength until the end came at the age of sixty-three, after months of suffering borne

with patience and courage. Everybody loved him and there was mourning in all the places where he had in any way been known. At the time of his funeral in Chicopee a local Irish contractor said to his employees: "All our work is to stop this afternoon. Not one of you is to lift a hammer or use a saw while that man is being buried." That was typical of the general feeling.

His body lay in state in the city hall, an honor never accorded to anyone else, the mayor issued a proclamation, and the funeral was in the biggest Protestant church. Crowds came and important judges and lawyers were present from all over the State. The streets were lined with mourners and everywhere was an atmosphere of pensive quiet. There was more sorrow in the town over his death than there had been over any other person's in all its history—and the people did not think of the great lawyer, but were saying, "Our George is gone."

A Bellamy Club was formed in Springfield on December 18, 1934, for the purpose of studying "Looking Backward," a book written by Edward Bellamy, of Chicopee, forty-six years previous. About fifty interested people attended the first meeting, including Mrs. Marion Bellamy Earnshaw, daughter of the novelist. This was the first Bellamy Club to be organized in Massachusetts, although from New York to California, from Europe to South America, societies had already been formed by enthusiastic groups that had been reading the prophetic writings of this Massachusetts journalist who foresaw social and economic changes.

Edward Bellamy was born in Chicopee Falls, March 26, 1850, and lived there all of his life except for short periods. His father was the Baptist minister at Chicopee Falls for thirty-five years. Edward spent a short time at Union College pursuing a special course in the study of literature and at eighteen he had a year abroad, mostly in Germany. While there his eyes were opened to social ills and "Man's inhumanity to man." He studied law and was admitted to the bar, but preferred a career as a journalist instead.

Bellamy was for a while on the editorial staff of the Springfield "Union" and also of the New York "Evening Post." With his brother, in 1880, he founded the Springfield "Daily News," but his heart was not in the directing of a newspaper. He commenced contributing short stories to current magazines and finally wrote novels

of striking originality and power. For a time he studied psychic phenomena and wrote a romance of immortality called "Miss Ludington's Sister." His historical novel, "The Duke of Stockbridge," which he wrote in 1879, did not appear until after his death. The scene was set in the time of Shays' Rebellion and showed his sympathy for the unfortunate debtors.

W. D. Howells described Bellamy's book, "Dr. Heidenhoff's Process," as "one of the finest feats in the region of romance."

"Looking Backward," the most popular of Bellamy's romances, was translated into several languages and has preserved his name until this day, when many of the inventions he prophesied have become realities. He foresaw television, but it interested him only a little.



EDWARD BELLAMY

He was chiefly concerned with social values and spiritual gains and the economic security which would make possible the best. Bellamy's socialism differed from some, in that it had no place for dictatorship, but instead advocated complete democracy. Private property was not to be abolished, but in the year 2000 everybody was to have a house and land and income. Production was to be publicly controlled and surplus materials piled up so that nature could not ruin the scheme. America was to be one great corporation with the citizens as shareholders. This was all to be accomplished by gradual methods so that there would be no class war.



The sensation created by "Looking Backward" was due to its intrinsic qualities, to a charming style, and to its adroitness in presenting its doctrine as "an enlightened self-interest or wholesale common sense." A million copies of this book were sold and clubs to carry out Bellamy's ideas began at once to be formed. The author, who before this had been modest and reticent, now took a vigorous and enthusiastic share in the propaganda for nationalism.

"Equality" was a sort of sequel to "Looking Backward" and advocated that each should have equal access to material things by a process of levelling up and not by levelling down. Eight principles were suggested: the abolishing of profit; the abolishing of money; equal distribution of the total wealth each year; the abolishing of private capital; equality of the sexes; individual service for the performance of common labor; regulation of industry; and security for all throughout life.

In 1891 Edward Bellamy founded in Boston the "New Nation," a weekly supported mainly by the earnings of his book, "Looking Backward." Two years later he published a pamphlet on "How to Employ the Unemployed in Mutual Maintenance." In this he wrote: "These men and women do not need charity from the state or anybody else. All they need in order to be fed, clothed, and sheltered is to be set to work to support one another."

Bellamy's health began to suffer from his intense work, tuberculosis developed, and he went to Colorado in a vain attempt to control the disease. When it was evident that the change of climate could do nothing for him, his wife, Emma Sanderson, of Chicopee Falls, whom he had married in 1882, brought him back to spend his last days in the valley which he preferred to all other places. He died May 22, 1898, in Chicopee Falls. A memorial edition of "Looking Backward," a book that stirred the world, was issued in 1917.

Chicopee was already a booming industrial center in the middle 'seventies. The products of the various factories were finding their way outside the confines of New England to more distant places and the tiny mills which had started on the banks of the Chicopee River became substantial and well known industries. In proportion to the growth of the mills the population increased at a steady rate. The Irish, already settled in the town, were followed by many of French descent, who went to work in the mills.



One of the best known among the thriving Chicopee factories was the J. Stevens Arms and Tool Company. The firm began by manufacturing small pistols under the name of the "Massachusetts Arms Company" in 1849, but later purchased property from the Ames Manufacturing Company and under the inventive leadership of Joshua Stevens continued this fine industry. As time went on the firm extended its activities into the manufacture of double-barrel breech-loading shotguns, single shotguns, sporting rifles and pocket pistols; later it expanded still further into the making of fine machinists' tools, such as calipers, dividers and double-lipped countersinks. The fire-arms achieved a great popularity, especially among hunters in this country and abroad, and to own a "Stevens" was to own a valuable piece of property superior in accuracy, durability and beauty of design. In January of 1896 Mr. Stevens and Mr. Taylor, an associate, sold their stock to other interests and retired, but the famous name of Stevens was still retained.

The Lamb Manufacturing Company, makers of knitting machines, was another established Chicopee industry. The "Lamb" machine was the only standard one for commercial knitting as well as the only "family knitter" which had proved its practicability. The needle was automatic, so that when fed with yarn and moved forward or backward, it would form the stitch by its own action and could be adapted to any size of work, tubular or flat, and single, double, or ribbed. Lamb machines, after once demonstrating their usefulness, were sold in large volume as a great step forward over the former laborious hand-knitting. Many woolen manufacturers bought the machines to convert the scraps and ends of yarn which accumulated in their factories, and hosiery manufacturers found that they could hasten the manufacture and lower the costs of their knitted stockings by using this mechanical knitting machine. In 1893 the A. G. Spalding and Bros., of Chicago, New York and Philadelphia, became interested in the company and together they turned out bicycles, gymnasium supplies and skates, as well as much of the iron and wooden goods required for their tremendous business.

In the early 'eighties the Poles came to Chicopee. The influx came about purely by accident when a group of Poles missed a train and were stranded in the section. Father Healey, a Catholic priest, took them to Chicopee, where they started to work and decided to stay.

Soon great numbers of Polish people came and settled in tenements and mill houses on the north side of the river at the Center. Now a large percentage of Chicopee population is Polish.

Market Square was the business section of the city, as it is today. A long wooden bridge spanned the Connecticut River, later supplanted by an iron one after the old bridge had been destroyed by fire. The Chapin Inn had burned down, removing a famous landmark in Chicopee. Chicopee Falls was expanding rapidly, as were Willimansett and Aldenville. The best building in town for a long time was located on Springfield Street of Chicopee Falls, and was used for educational purposes until the modern noises of adjacent bicycle manufacturing so disturbed the teachers and pupils that it was impossible. The old brick schoolhouse on School Street had been torn down to be replaced by a new one and the old high school on Grape Street was still standing. From time to time small newspapers struggled into being, but soon failed against the competition of the Springfield newspapers with their wider coverage.

The 'eighties marked many changes and additions to Chicopee. Its streets were in good condition and the policy of temporarily patching up the roads by scraping the contents toward the center was abandoned for more modern methods. The Chicopee Falls Bridge was raised four feet and shingled and planked to keep it in good condition. Among the significant municipal improvements were sewer extensions of brick pipe on several streets. The well-populated streets were Center, Chapin, Springfield, Front and Grape, and in Chicopee Falls, Bay View Avenue, Spring and Cochran streets. The famous South Holyoke Ferry was now an old and decayed boat, and the city of Holyoke provided a new one, half of the cost being shouldered by Chicopee, in accordance with a decree by the county commissioners.

The town hall, erected in the 'seventies, is an imposing structure of brick with stone trimmings, and has a recessed entrance, at each end of which is a memorial tablet of bronze, set in relief work of Gothic form, and bearing the names of those gallant soldiers who fought for Chicopee during the Civil War. The picturesque feature of the building is the tower, which was then a landmark up and down the river before it was hidden by surrounding buildings.

Chicopee in the 'eighties was industrial in essence, but it did not neglect the cultural development of its residents. There was a library

containing 9,000 volumes and a branch library at Chicopee Falls. Schools included the high school building at the Center, high school rooms at the Falls, and the Chicopee Street School. There was also an evening school for the education of those who could not attend during the day.

Chicopee's development has through the years been a development of sections, divided into the Center, Chicopee Falls, Willimansett, Chicopee Street, Fairview, and Aldenville. In the late 'eighties, the total valuation was almost \$6,000,000, which rapidly increased year by year. Besides the city hall, libraries and schools, there were other public buildings, including the Chicopee Almshouse, which had been opened in 1877. The first street railway line in Chicopee was built in 1888 from Springfield to the center of Chicopee Falls. With the opening of the bridge at Willimansett, in 1892, zeal for street railways became great and men, women and children signed petitions to companies to build lines past their houses. Modern development was known even in that day, and a forest of old stakes showed where one speculator bought acres of land and divided it into home lots, streets and avenues.

In 1890 Chicopee decided that with a population of 14,000 it had outgrown the town meeting form of government. Under the leadership of George M. Stearns a city charter was procured from the Legislature and Deacon George S. Taylor was elected the first mayor. One of his early official acts was to appoint Mr. Stearns as city solicitor, knowing that the legal affairs of the new city would be in capable hands. The single term precedent was first broken by Mayor George D. Eldredge in 1896, at which time the city charter was revised and improved.

In the 'nineties there were five substantial Protestant churches at the Center, as well as a fire station. The business blocks were on Exchange Street for the most part and there were fine residences on Springfield Street. Grove and West Main streets were built up, as was Broadway above Walnut Street. Middle Street was a narrow back street, formerly "Barn Lane," which used to be lined with stables and barnyards. The Second Congregational Church and the Falls Methodist Church were well filled on the Sabbath and the Baptists worshipped in Union Hall.



There was a Chicopee Falls branch of the Boston and Maine Railroad and the city was served by dams and canals. A steel truss bridge spanned the water at the Falls, while the covered bridge at Chicopee had ceased to be a toll bridge. The electric road was opened in the Spring of 1895, following the main road through Willimansett and extending over the hill to make connections with the lines to Springfield at Chicopee Falls. Willimansett by this time was a well-developed part of the municipality of Chicopee and in Aldenville small homes were springing up rapidly as the population increased. The financial affairs of the people and the industries were handled by one national bank and two savings banks.

The first venture in municipal ownership came in 1892, when the Legislature granted authority to purchase the property and privileges of the existing water companies and to broaden and make larger their capacities by using new sources of water. In 1898 the city had a good water supply, operating on a pumping system which could furnish 2,800,000 gallons of water daily.

In May of 1896 the city ventured into the electric light business and a new station with high grade equipment and apparatus was erected. This municipal electric system served the city well and a superintendent's report states "The street lighting system made a creditable showing, inasmuch as the amount of light furnished has been increased 60 percent over the amount previously supplied at a manufacturing cost inside the prices formerly paid by the city."

A phenomenon of Chicopee at this time was its almost overnight development as a bicycle center. The bicycle craze which swept the entire country caused Chicopee industry to accelerate its production greatly. The Lamb and Ames plants were already in bicycle production and two factories, the Overman Wheel Company and the Spalding and Pepper Company established great production in Chicopee on the wave of the bicycle popularity.

The Overman factory was one of the most imposing places in Chicopee under the leadership of Albert Overman, president of the company. For fourteen years they had been making bicycles, starting in a small way in a little shop, and rising to one of the largest bicycle factories in the country. Instead of hiring racing men to ride their wheels in the interest of advertising, the Overman put the money into quality and fineness of manufacture and the reputation of the "Victor"



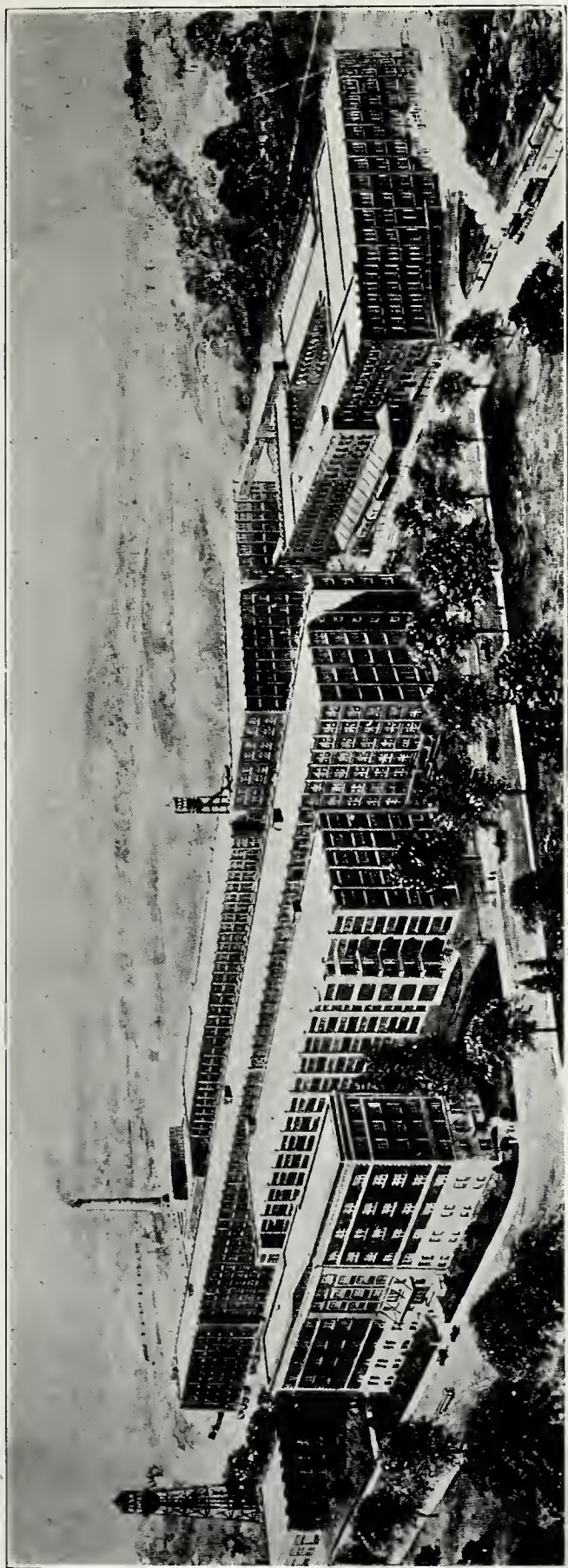
was made by itself. Each year the company put out various models suited to men of different weights, so that purchasers could order their bicycles custom made. The Overman plant was the only place in the world at the time which made the complete bicycle from handle-bars to tires, with machinery developed almost completely by its own technicians. Experts were employed to do nothing but ride the bicycles and report in the minutest detail how far the wheel went when it ran out of oil, the power used to drive it, and other research data necessary for the best in the manufacture of bicycles.

Chicopee bicycles figured prominently in the news. A man named Frank Lenz, the first to attempt a trip across Asia on a bicycle, rode a Victor. He was murdered when his remarkable journey was nearly completed. The 25th United States Infantry Bicycle Corps mounted Chicopee-made bicycles and carrying their tents, arms, rations and ammunition rode from Fort Missoula, Montana, to St. Louis to test the practicability of the bicycle as a machine for military purposes.

Two great industries came to the city just before the beginning of the new century. The A. G. Spalding & Bros. plant at the Center and the Fisk Rubber Company in Chicopee Falls occupy large areas of floor space and manufacture products that are famous the country over.

The Spalding industry originally started in Chicopee Falls with the manufacture of bicycles and later included the manufacture of tennis racquets, and in 1894 added golf clubs, when that game was gaining a foothold in the country. The manufacture of gymnasium apparatus was removed from Philadelphia, and the Spalding organization in Chicopee started the manufacture of golf balls two or three years later. When the so-called American bicycle trust came into being, the company abandoned its bicycle products and turned all its energies to the manufacture of sports equipment, purchasing the plant of the old Ames Manufacturing Company in 1904. This plant was remodeled and enlarged and the foundry business of the old Ames organization was carried along for a time, but later abandoned.

Up to 1914 tennis ball centers had been imported from Germany and covered here. These balls were giving much dissatisfaction and Spalding at this time started to make tennis balls at Chicopee. In 1929 sales reached nearly \$10,000,000 and, as additional space was required, the plant of the Stevens-Duryea Automobile Company in



FISK TIRE AND RUBBER COMPANY PLANT AT CHICOPEE FALLS

Willimansett was purchased, which gave approximately 200,000 feet of floor space. Tennis ball manufacture was concentrated in this unit. In late years the firm has placed much emphasis on golf equipment as well as tennis equipment, and these are the two principal divisions of the plant's manufactures, although a number of miscellaneous items are made also.

The Fisk Rubber Company came into being in Chicopee Falls in 1898. It was organized by Noyes W. Fisk for the purpose of manufacturing bicycle tires and solid carriage tires, and the small plant of 27,000 feet of floor space owned by the Spalding and Pepper Company was purchased. Two years later, as the automobile was becoming an accepted fact instead of a phenomenon, the Fisk Company went into the manufacture of automobile tires and since that time the company has kept pace with the new and exacting demands of the industry to maintain an outstanding position in tire manufacturing. The original small plant expanded into the great tire and tube building plant now in Chicopee Falls and the personnel increased quickly as automobiles ceased to be a luxury and came within the reach of the average man's pocketbook. The Fisk organization has its own cotton-spinning plant at New Bedford, Massachusetts, and every inch of cotton cord used in Fisk tires is made in this mill according to Fisk specifications. Today Fisk tires and rubber sundries are known everywhere throughout the country and many of the foremost developments in the tire industry were started at the Fisk plant.

A well-known institution of Chicopee is Our Lady of the Elms Academy. This school had its beginning in the spring of 1899, when the Right Reverend Thomas D. Beaven, late bishop of the diocese, selected the present Chicopee location as the site of a new school for girls. The land first purchased for this purpose was the Stebbins home on Springfield Street, which included the dwelling house, other buildings, and a large tract of land. From the mother home of the Order of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Springfield several of the sisters were chosen to establish the school. There was but a small enrollment at first, but it gradually became larger and at the end of four years the first Elms commencement took place.

As the school grew it became necessary to add to the original Stebbins property and in 1892 the residence of Thomas McCarthy, which adjoined the Stebbins home was bought, and later another pur-



chase was made of the property of the late Justin Spalding. In 1904 the academy chapel was built on land in the rear of the Stebbins home and in the same year the Veranus Casino, a large and well-equipped auditorium, came into being. Three years later the Bixby home on the opposite side of the original Stebbins tract was purchased, this placing a total of about thirty-five acres at the disposal of the academy. The school became thoroughly modernized in 1923 when the first of a group of three beautiful buildings was erected, a four-story structure of red pressed brick over a steel framework, at a cost of \$250,000.

A historic Chicopee Falls landmark was torn down in 1935 when the old Jacobs house finally submitted to the inroads of progress. This house, located on Bridge Street, where there were mineral springs, was once famous as a health resort. The beautiful white building with a colonial white piazza was built in 1840, but since then had undergone many changes. From its sanatorium stage it was converted into a tenement block and later small stores were opened on the lower floor. The land on the opposite side of the street was owned by the Chicopee Manufacturing Company and an official of the company, Mr. Osgood, occupied the house. Residents of the time in Chicopee spoke with pride of the Osgood gardens, which extended the length of what is now Main Street. Flowers of rich hues bloomed in square and rounded flowerbeds, all arranged very symmetrically.

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Thumb, the famous midget couple, were relatives of the Osgood family and visited at their home every year at the end of the circus season. The couple's little pony and cart were kept in a big barn on the premises and the tiny couple naturally attracted considerable attention as they drove around town in their miniature outfit.

An interesting character of present-day Chicopee is Eugene Champagne, a faith healer, who says his magic words over the bodies of the afflicted. His modest but well kept home stands on the muddy lowlands alongside the Connecticut River. In the center of the yard is a high stone shrine. The enclosed veranda has several statues of saints and inside the house is a chapel with the stations of the cross and many holy objects. Believers may drink from a well in the yard or get a bottle of medicine for seventy-five cents. Testimonials of cures of sprains, nosebleeds, drunkenness and more serious ailments



can be secured freely from the neighbors. The healer sends out circulars, written in French, urging sufferers to forego tomatoes and high heels and pray to St. Francis Xavier. The return mail is enormous. Many call in automobiles, as many as sixty being there at a time on pleasant Sundays and some coming from as far away as Canada.

The Chicopee of today is a modern municipality in every respect. As has been the case in the past, the present population of about 44,000 people depend in great measure on the industries of the community, either directly or indirectly, although some work in the adjacent cities of Holyoke and Springfield. The principal industries are the Spalding, Fisk and Chicopee manufacturing companies, and the Westinghouse has a branch in the section where government apparatus is manufactured. There are a number of smaller industries which add to the main products of tires, sporting goods, and surgical bandages by producing toilet accessories, knit goods, men's and boys' clothing, fabricated steel, paper boxes and brooms.

The expansion of Chicopee from the beginning of the century has been gradual and certain, although not phenomenal during any one time. Market Square is still the business section of the city, now encircled with modern office and store buildings. The city has four hospitals, one park and four theatres. Transportation problems are well-handled by the street railway system and access to railroads is found in the Boston and Maine line. Chicopee has three libraries, with the principal one on Market Square, next to the city hall. There are twenty-eight individual schools, of which seven are parochial, the latter for the use of the large French and Polish population. The high school, recently completed, is a beautiful building, modern and roomy, which has a frontage on a large lawn cut by a curving driveway. There are twenty-two church buildings, the older being those of Protestant denomination and Irish Catholic, and the newer ones comprising the parishes of the French and Polish. Financial affairs are taken care of by five banks, one trust company and two savings banks. The assessed valuation of modern Chicopee is \$45,000,000 and the fifty-three industrial establishments turn out products valued at \$46,000,000 annually.

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*Holyoke, the Paper City*

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## CHAPTER II

### *Holyoke, the Paper City*

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The site of Holyoke, first called Ireland Parish, had been known to the Indians in the days when they held undisputed sway hereabouts and the falls of the Connecticut were a favorite fishing ground. No white men had settled in the region until in 1675 a venturesome man named Riley appeared on the scene. He was the pioneer settler and located just north of Riley Brook, now the southern boundary of the city. No doubt he was thus located purposely close by the "water highway" and near the old trail between Springfield and Northampton.

There is little evidence that other settlers soon sought this vicinity, but the Riley family lived in it long enough to give it the name "Ireland," now only a memory.

In that part of Holyoke formerly Smiths Ferry there was one sturdy settler, Benjamin Wright. It is recalled that in 1704 his place, then called "Lower Farms," was attacked by the Indians. They were repulsed with the loss of one warrior and when they attempted to burn the house a youth named Stebbins wrapped a feather bed about him to protect himself from arrows and then got water with which he extinguished the fire.

It was some years before one of the earliest families, that of Benjamin Ball, settled, in 1745, on Northampton and Cherry streets, and the six families which soon gathered there "forted together nights for fear of the Indians." In 1749 Captain John Miller settled on Northampton Street and owned a large part of the region now covered by the city of Holyoke. Captain Miller took part in the capture of Louisburg not long before. The Miller house remained in the family until 1857. During the Revolutionary War it was kept as an inn and was the half-way-house on the old stage line between Springfield and Northampton. It was the oldest house in town when torn down in 1884. In the Ingleside region Colonel Ely kept a tav-



ern, and on his farm the last of the Indians in this part of the State was allowed to build a hut. He was unwilling to follow his dusky tribe to parts unknown and he dwelt there for several years before he died. On the same historic street was the "Brown house," where once lived Enoch Ely, a Revolutionary soldier. The insurgents engaged in Shays' Rebellion on their march down the valley, at one time attacked this house, but failed to secure the occupant, who had probably fled to the nearby woods. Bullet holes in the front door were plainly visible afterward.

Still farther north on the same street stands the old Fairfield homestead, in early years the property of Lucas Morgan. The date of its construction is not at hand, but an incident will indicate it. One dark night Mr. Morgan, on leading his horse into the stable, placed his hand on the warm head of a crouching Indian and lost no time in getting himself on the inside of the strong back door of his house, which soon resounded with the blows of a tomahawk. A shot from Mr. Morgan's gun promptly made all quiet without and the morning light revealed in the snow the tracks of three Indians and before the door the farm dog lying dead.

The old cemetery at "Baptist Village" supplies some interesting items. For instance, Nathan Parks, while hunting in 1797, and lying concealed in a ditch, was potted as unerringly by Frink with a flintlock as if he had carried a high-powered Winchester. Lieutenant Joseph Morgan is set forth as one of those included in the capture of Fort William Henry in 1757. But how he retained his scalp in the massacre that followed we are not told.

Over beyond Ashley Ponds at the West Springfield line was a gristmill and hydraulic cement factory and a little south in West Springfield, on a brook, was a saw and shingle mill, and down near the present dam were a gristmill and a cotton mill.

In 1832 Chester Crafts bought an inn property and conducted it as a tavern, store or post-office until his death in 1871. His brother, afterward mayor of Holyoke, drove a four-horse stage from Springfield to Northampton, about twenty miles, carrying mail and passengers. Something stronger than water used to be sold in those old stage-driving, river-boating, canal-freighting and fishery days. It was told of Richard Thorpe, that after drinking somewhat freely at the tavern and having his bottle properly filled with New England

rum, he then proceeded up the road toward Easthampton. After toiling up the steep incline he lay down and fell asleep and a man who was mowing in a nearby field saw the bottle protruding from his pocket and emptied the contents into his dinner pail. Then he refilled the flask with pure water from a brook and left the wayfarer to awake later to slake his thirst. When the sleeper did so his wrath was boundless. He hastened back to the tavern and made the air blue with resentment. No human power could convince him that the pure water had not been placed in the bottle at the tavern. So his bottle was refilled, free of charge.

At this early date the pioneers rode eight miles to the mother settlement to attend town meetings or religious services. This northerly section of West Springfield, which then also included Agawam and Feeding Hills, did not grow rapidly. The "fields" now occupied by the city proper was a sandy, unproductive region, but the land along Northampton Street was cultivated and even the foothills of the Mt. Tom range. Corn, wheat and rye were raised and large harvests taken yearly to Boston and other markets. Elisha Ashley raised 1,300 bushels of rye one year, but Deacon Peresh Hitchcock beat him with 1,400 bushels. This led to the manufacture of whiskey and distilleries were started at Money Hole Hill and other places down the valley. Farmers' produce and a few manufactured articles were carried down the river in sloops, scows and barges, and whatever was required in return was brought back and left at the river landings, where wagons were loaded and then drawn to places in the adjacent country. Baptist Village, the section of the city now known as Elmwood, was the principal part of the parish in early years, and located as it was upon the only road on the west side of the river between Springfield and Northampton, it was a stopping place for stages and a resort for farmers living in the country about.

The Connecticut River had borne considerable traffic between Hartford and the foot of South Hadley Falls, but the towns above were compelled to transport their merchandise partly, at least, by land, until in 1792 twenty men formed a group called "the Proprietors of the Locks and Canals on the Connecticut River." They built a canal which started where the South Hadley Falls end of the present great dam is located under a red sandstone bluff and extended northward along the river's trend two and one-half miles, where it opened into the river above a wing dam.

The construction was placed in the hands of Benjamin Prescott, of Northampton, who had to use his own judgment and ingenuity to scale the falls, because the canal was the first in the country. He had no precedent to fall back on. Engineer Prescott built of stone, covered with plank, a plane two hundred and thirty feet long, at an angle of thirteen and one-half degrees and extending from the guard lock at the end of the canal to a lock at the north of Buttery Brook. On each side of the upper end of the inclined plane was an overshot water-wheel, sixteen feet in diameter. These wheels were connected by a shaft on which was wound a strong chain attached to a carriage. The carriage was supported by three pairs of wheels of decreasing height to keep the floor of the carriage level. When a boat was to be let down the inclined plane it was floated onto the carriage and the wheels set in motion to unwind the chain. The force of the water turning the overshot wheels drew the boat carriage up again. This device, together with the canal with which it was linked, comprised one of the most novel water transportation systems ever developed.

The waterway was constructed for the accommodation of boats twenty feet wide and forty feet long, but after ten years of use increasing commerce compelled the deepening of the canal and an improved system of locks. At the lower end a man kept a powerful span of horses and four yokes of oxen constantly in waiting to tow up the canal all boats whose owners paid the required toll.

A swing ferry was the means of communication between Ireland Parish and Canal Village, and from the west bank a county road went along up Money Hole Hill to Northampton Street. The canal around the falls gave a great impulse to river traffic and the growth of towns on the river. The vast body of water coursing its foamy way down the Hadley rapids was unused on the west side of the river except by a community gristmill and a cotton mill built in 1831 by the old Hadley Falls Company. One of the finest waterpowers in the country was here running to waste. The great volume of water, the rapid fall of sixty feet, the rocky ledge underlying the stream and flanked by walls of solid stone whereon to locate a dam, the convenient site for canals and mills, encircled on the three sides by the graceful sweep and steady, unfailing flow of the "Great River" had long attracted the attention of capitalists.

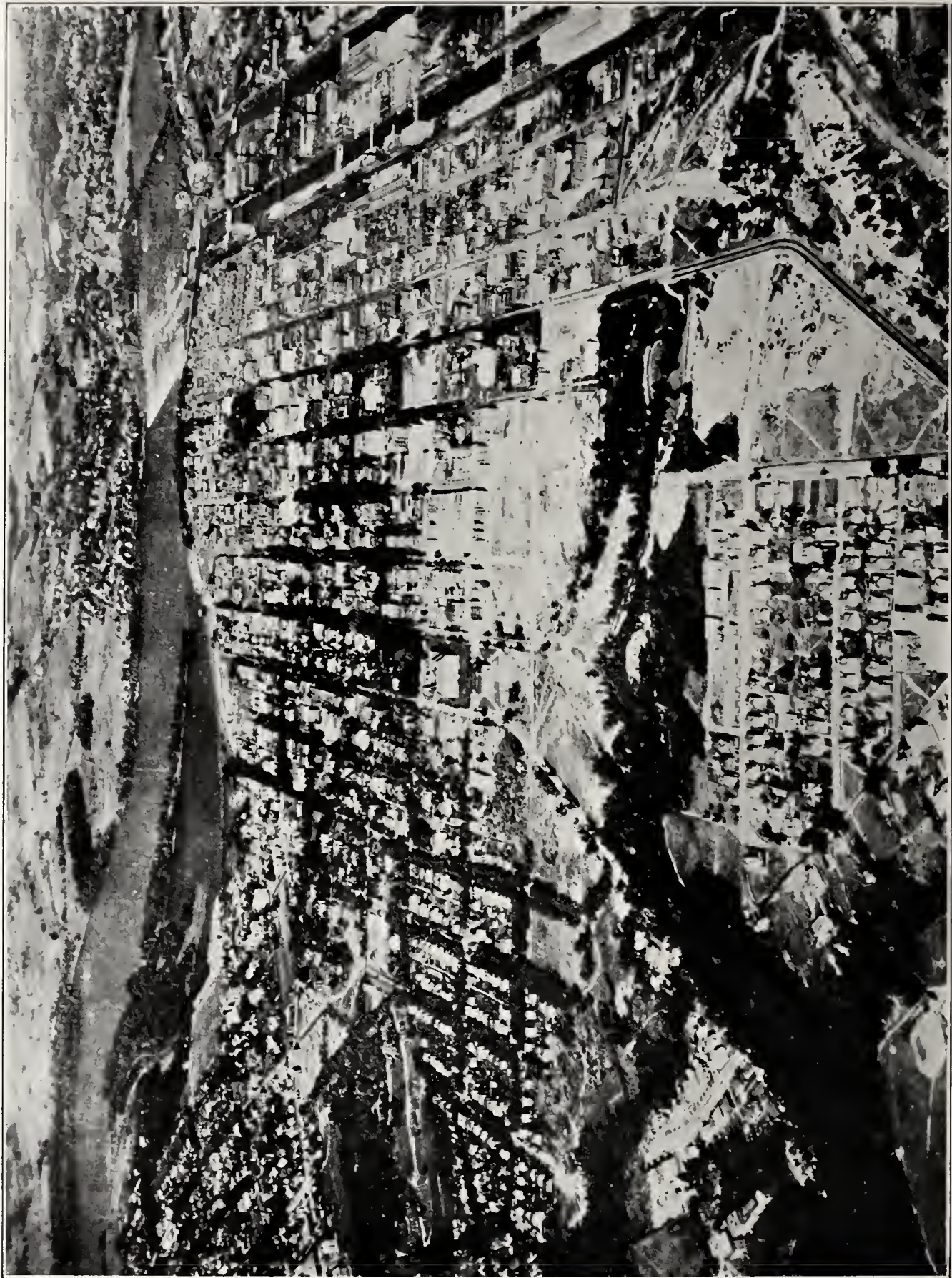


It is claimed that no land in the world is more productive, or could be made more productive, than the bottom lands of the Connecticut, and no valley is more abundant in natural resources for mechanical and manufacturing enterprises. Holyoke alone has waterpower enough, if used, to support 100,000 persons, while up and down the valley are numerous other available sources of waterpower as yet only partly used.

At this date twenty-two houses were scattered on the "fields" and one hundred and eight dwellings held the remaining population of the parish. By the end of the next decade stage routes and river navigation faced the destructive competition of the Connecticut River Railroad.

Soon after this event capitalists visited the falls and with great secrecy made plans for the construction of a dam across the river and the purchase of all the land on either side of the river necessary to the proper development of a great manufacturing city. They engaged as their agent George C. Ewing, a salesman for the Fairbanks Scale Company of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, who in his journeyings up and down the valley had acquired considerable familiarity with the region. He became impressed with the idea that at the South Hadley Falls was one of the largest available waterpowers in the country going to waste and shortly had bought up for them 1,100 acres of land on the present site of Holyoke. The total number of acres was afterward increased to 1,500. Large prices were paid for the land, if viewed from a farming standpoint, which had previously been the land's only claim to worth; but from a manufacturing standpoint the prices were extremely moderate. Five thousand dollars, at the time the dam was completed, would have bought fifty acres right in the best part of the present city. Most of the farmers were ready enough to sell at the prices offered, but some consented one day and repented the next, thinking they might get higher prices. The only one with whom any trouble was had was Sam Ely, who had an eighty-acre farm on the river side some distance below the proposed dam. Half he sold, but the rest he clung to. He was an old-fashioned farmer, who had an antipathy to innovations, and he wished to keep the old homestead on which he had been brought up and where he had always lived. Besides, he said he didn't want to see the corporations control everything and he was sorry they had come there. "He didn't s'pose he





VIEW OF BRIDGE AND CITY FROM THE AIR



could raise nothing now; it'd all be stolen." But the company wanted the land and they kept after him. "Uncle" John Chase was their emissary in this matter. Finally, Sam Ely got sick of the harassing and one day seeing Uncle Chase approaching on his usual errand, he raised his chamber window and poked the muzzle of his old gun over the sash and warned Uncle Chase to come no nearer or he would shoot. Uncle Chase thought this an idle threat and kept right on and Ely pulled the trigger. The musket was heavily loaded and the discharge was quite startling. The visitor was not hurt, but he was well scared and made haste to retreat. This event was the sensation of the town for some time. There was talk of arresting Ely, but this was not considered politic, as anything that disturbed him would but put off the day of securing the land. The wisdom of this course was proved when a little later the desired transfer was made.

Meanwhile the Boston company went ahead and work on the dam at once commenced. This project of constructing a dam on the great rapids, which should withstand the powerful current of the Connecticut River and afford motive power for a new city of mills and shops, was so gigantic and the capital to be invested was so large for those days, that the undertaking was famous from its inception and still ranks among the foremost manufacturing enterprises of the world.

Mr. Ewing had charge of hiring the men for work on the dam and employed several hundred at eighty cents a day, but the contractors who were building the canal reduced their wages to seventy cents a day. The directors instructed Mr. Ewing to do the same, so he paid the difference to some of his men out of his own pocket. In order to complete the work that year it was planned to work the men on Sundays, so Mr. Ewing resigned, as he believed it "contrary to the laws of God and man." The people of the vicinity appreciated his character and not long after sent him to the Legislature. He was subsequently superintendent of schools and did much to lay out the city and improve its appearance.

On January 1, 1848, there was a general strike among the men employed in the preliminary work pertaining to the dam. When twenty of the strikers went back to work, hundreds of rioters gathered around the workers and mobbed them. Several residents and engineers who tried to interfere were injured and had to be carried off

the field. The militia and twenty-five artillerymen from Northampton were called in, but came too late to be of service.

When the dam was completed and a day was set for testing it, crowds of people came from all the country about to observe this new marvel whose estimated waterpower would furnish employment for 100,000 persons. It had much the appearance of the rude horse sheds we see behind the country churches, being a hollow framework of timbers, with a roof slanting up-stream. There were those who scoffed at the new structure and one man drew a line on it with a bit of chalk and maintained that when the water rose to that point the whole thing would give way. Others maintained that it was as stable as the rock beneath, and one excited citizen declared that "God Almighty couldn't sweep it away." The gates were closed in the morning and many people, as the waters slowly rose, walked back and forth on the top of the dam, or jumped about on the dry rocks of the river bed below. But in the afternoon the dam sprang a leak and the people were warned back to the banks. Brush and gravel were thrown on the places that were leaking the worst, but as the water slowly came up higher and higher the strain upon the dam was so great that the water came through in large quantities. Then it was seen that the massive stone bulkhead at the west side showed signs of weakening. It was evidently going to tip over. In case it did, the vast body of water collecting above would sweep through the village below and destroy everything in its path. Quantities of railroad iron were brought and piled upon the bulkhead in great haste, but while this work was going on there was a crack in mid-stream and the whole dam, save a little at each shore, was seen tipping over and crumbling before the pent-up waters of the river. A mighty wave rushed and roared over the ragged rocks of the river bed and spent itself far below on the South Hadley shore. The water was full of broken timbers, tossing about in the surging torrent, and these seemed to the eyes of the excited crowds on shore to be struggling human beings. It was a terrible sight.

Those who saw it say that the front of the rushing waters was a wall, high at the start, but becoming less as the released water went down stream. There was a ferry some distance below the dam and when the ferryboat was struck by the water it was like an egg shell

upon its bosom. The boat was carried three or four miles and stranded on the shore.

While the pond was filling a man interested in the company was telegraphing at intervals to some of the property owners in Boston concerning progress. His telegrams read about as follows, the last one being verbatim: "10 A. M., the gates were just closed and the water is filling behind the dam." "12 m., the dam is leaking badly." "1 P. M., we cannot stop the leaking." "2 P. M., the stones of the bulkhead are giving away." "3.20 P. M., your old dam has gone to hell by way of Willimansett."

Every house in the village on the Holyoke banks was emptied of its occupants and for the moment each who had friends or relatives among the laborers were sure they were lost. Women wrung their hands and wept and shrieked. "Mikey's gone, Mikey's gone!" one would cry. "Oh, I shall never see John any more!" sobbed another, while the exclamation of still another is remembered to have run in this wise: "Oh, my husband is in there! He's in there, and me with my seven children—what am I going to do?" The stream seemed full of men and everybody thought they had some friend drowned there. But the waters gradually subsided, friends were found all safe and peace was restored. The flow of water from above having been stopped by the closing of the gates in the morning, the water had pretty much run out from the channel below, leaving the river very shallow and slow; so when toward evening, a sudden, muddy flood filled with timbers and débris, came sweeping down from the north, the towns and villages were filled with alarm and curiosity and each farmer made haste to hitch his horse into his wagon and take the up-valley road to examine into the cause. A telegram was sent to Springfield informing them that there was a "big freshet coming" and the railroad did a heavy business that evening bringing up the sightseers.

This disaster was a hard blow to the company which built the dam, but they went to work at once on a new one. If the first attempt had not brought success it had at least given valuable experience. The new structure was made immensely massive and solid. The wreck of the old dam was cleared from the banks and two coffer dams were built, one on each side of the river, each of which extended two hundred feet from the bank into the stream. The water was pumped out



of these coffer dams and the rock was excavated to a depth of six feet. The construction of the main dam was then begun by laying down three fifteen-inch square timbers lengthwise across the river with their upper surface inclined at an angle of twenty-one degrees. The rock below was cut to give them a proper bearing and then the sticks were bolted to the rocks with iron bolts, 3,000 of them being used for this purpose in the whole dam. In this way the dam was started in six-foot sections, which were tied to each other by twelve-inch sticks running across the river. There were one hundred and seventy of these sections. The structure above the foundation sticks was made up of alternate courses of these ties and rafters. Between the rafters short blocks were introduced to prevent bending, and at the splicings of the rafter longer pieces were put in. The foot of each rafter was bolted to the rock. The structure was thus reared to its full height and its up-stream surface covered with six-inch planks, except for a space of sixteen feet which was left open temporarily. The toe of the dam was secured by placing a second covering of plank at right angles to the first and bolted to the rock. Then the structure was filled solid with gravel. The crest of the dam was covered with boiler iron to protect it from the blows of driftwood and ice.

In this manner two hundred feet of the dam on each side of the river was completed, and as the summer advanced and the water became lower, two hundred feet more was done on each side, crowding the water into a space of two hundred and seventeen feet in the middle of the stream. Then a higher coffer dam was thrown across the gap and the work went on to completion. Forty-six gates, each eighteen feet long, were constructed to close the openings left in the planking. All open spaces were closely packed with stone as well as gravel to a height of ten feet and the planking of the upper portion of the dam was eighteen inches of solid timber. The total cost of the structure was set down as \$150,000.

When the dam was finished in 1849 the water fell perpendicularly over its crest, and its pounding could be heard for miles about. With the air just right the sound was audible as far away as Springfield. The water as it fell imparted to the earth a slight vibration that would set such windows and doors as were not perfectly tight into a clicking motion. You might see a man jump up in the midst of service in one of the churches and stick his pocketknife into some window that

was keeping up an unchurchly rattling. Everything about a house that was the least bit loose was "a-shaking and a-clapping" and you could see the jarring motions of poles or sticks in the garden which were not very firmly set in the earth. It is said that one house rocked to such a degree that an old man who was in it was seasick and in another quaking house a man thought he had the shaking palsy. These results were rather astonishing to begin with, but the natives soon became used to them. "The dam was a great music-box" to be sure, but once having become accustomed to it the sensation on getting out of hearing of its roar was a curious one. The stillness was almost oppressive. "It seemed as if Sunday was come; it made one feel queer; you couldn't think what the matter was, there was such a dead silence."

A little four-foot apron projected from the crest of the dam and from this was suspended, some eight feet below, by iron rods, a plank walk on which one could pass beneath the sheet of water which was falling over the dam. Not many would aspire to this experience, as a walk on those slippery planks in the mists and sprays from the flying waters, and with such a roar in your ears that you could hardly hear yourself think, would not be enjoyable to the average individual. The logs and ice dropping over the dam soon demolished this walk and it was never rebuilt. During the filling of the pond the water below left the bed of the river, only a little remaining in hollows in the rocks. Many tools that had been lost in the work were then recovered and eels and fish were taken out of the pools by the handfals.

There are several more or less tragic bits of history connected with the dam that are worth recording. Some time after the structure was finished, three Irishmen were crossing the river in a boat, just above the fall, when an oar broke. The man rowing became confused and pulled furiously with the remaining oar, but that only served to turn the boat round and round. So the craft was dashed over the dam. But luckily the swift current below swept the men close by a great rock in mid-stream, which they managed to grasp and soon were ensconced safely on its top and yelling lustily for help. The cry was soon running through the town that there were three men over the dam and the crowds at once began to gather on the banks. The accident occurred just at the edge of evening on a cold day in autumn and the plight of the poor fellows out on the rock after their ducking

was not enviable. Night settled gloomily down and bonfires were kindled on both banks to show the shipwrecked that those on shore were planning help. At the Falls and at Holyoke there then lived a number of the old river boatmen who were familiar with the stream and from long practice knew how to handle a boat with the greatest skill and dexterity. Four of these men, Isaac Hadley, Levi Dickinson, Sam Ely and Joseph Ely manned one of the old flatboats lying in disuse at the ferry landing, poled it up along shore, crept cautiously out in the bit of water below the dam, which was a little less fierce than that below, took the three men from the rock and shot down through the rapids to safety. It was a desperate undertaking carried bravely through.

Not many years later the leader of these rescuers, Isaac Hadley, met his death here. Mr. Hadley was a sturdy, thick-set, powerfully-built man, a man greatly looked up to in the community, and a man of good judgment, who could always be depended on. He had been captain of one of the old river boats and later had been an overseer in the constructing of the dam. It thus came about that he was always called upon to superintend such repairing as was necessary at the dam. In the summer of 1866 he worked for several days with two helpers stopping a leak which was making trouble. A leak was made apparent by an upward boiling of the water below the fall and was usually stopped by dumping in quantities of sand bags just above. Before this job was finished the water began to rise rapidly and on the twentieth of August, when Mr. Hadley crossed the ferry to begin the day's labor, he remarked that he had never so dreaded to go to his work as he did that morning. But the morning wore quietly away and at eleven o'clock the job was pronounced done. At this moment the three men noticed the flatboat on which they were working was dragging anchor and was on the very edge of the dam. The suction of the water on the verge of the fall was terrible. There was no hope. Mr. Hadley called out for each man to take care of himself and the next instant the boat plunged into the surging waters below. Hadley and one other were drowned. The third man, when he came to himself after the shock, found he was drifting past a rock just below the fall and he managed to gain a foothold on it. His shouts at once attracted attention and thousands of people gathered on the banks within a few minutes. A crew of the old watermen was soon found for one of the



flatboats. The boat came up along shore and when it turned its head out into the river and tossed on the broken waters, made its uncertain way toward mid-stream, the multitude on the bank held its breath with anxiety. Then the rock was reached, the man clambered aboard, and a great shout went up from the crowds on shore. But it was quickly hushed, for the foaming rapids below were still to be passed. Two of the boatmen were at the oars, the other two stood, one on each side at the bow, with poles in hand and a watchful eye on the currents before them. They knew the channel and the suction of every rock. The boat started on its course and went straight down through the rapids like a race horse, tossed or guided this way or that in the wild waves, and at times half lost in dashing spray, but presently it came out safe in the quieter waters below. Then the witnessing crowds breathed freely again and gave vent to their feeling in long continued cheering.

In a little shanty by the canal on the South Hadley side, at the foot of Glasgow Hill, lived Rufus Robinson in his last years all alone. He was one of the old boatmen and had the reputation of being the most skillful waterman on the river. No one had a higher opinion of Rufus Robinson than Rufus Robinson himself. In earlier days he had distinguished himself by piloting down the rapids a steamboat which had been built for use above, but proved unprofitable. Now he thought he could row a boat right across on top of the dam and come to no harm. He was a limber, graceful, daring fellow, a very good sort of person except for the liquor he let run down his throat. And so, as in many a case before his day and since, he met death through drink. One Sunday, having rowed across the river to slake a dryness he was subject to, he was seen to come down to his boat later with staggering steps and a few minutes afterward the boat was dashed over the dam.

Another tragic story has a woman for its subject. It was a winter's evening. The river above the dam was frozen in a glary sheet of ice and a strong north wind had come up and was sweeping with bitter force down the stream. The woman, after visiting at the Falls, started across the ice toward home. It was a dark night, the sky was clouded and a fine sleet was cutting through the air. She became somewhat confused in the wind and storm and when the full force of the gale struck her in mid-river she began to slip along the glassy surface. She struggled against the wind, but it still drove her along



toward the fatal dam, whose roar was sounding in her ears above that of the storm. She fell on her knees and clung to the ice, but when she rose again to battle toward home, the wind pushed her slowly but surely toward the dam. She cried for help, but few were abroad on such a wild night, and the wind stifled her shouts so that in the dull roar of the waters, now so near, she could not have been heard a dozen yards away. She sat down with her back to the wind and took off her shoes, hoping that in stocking feet she would not slip. But her feet quickly numbed and she had to give up. In the morning the weather had cleared and quieted and then a chance passer found her body only a few feet from the edge of the dam on the glary ice which was streaked with the remnants of the night's snow scud.

In the course of time a suspicion arose that the constant pounding of the water over the dam must be wearing away the bottom below and so endangering the base of the structure. A test showed that hollows twenty, thirty and even forty feet deep had been worn in the river bed and steps were at once taken to build an apron to the dam. This was done in 1868-70. First these worn hollows were filled with sand bags and with "cribs" made of logs criss-crossing and filled with stone till they sank. The stone came from all the country around and many a farmer took this opportunity to sell at a profit the old stone walls zig-zagging about his fields. While this work was going on, a diver, who had gone below to examine the cavity they were filling, was caught by the current, the tubes and cords connecting him with the surface were snapped, and he was never seen again. Search for the body was unavailing. He was probably drawn into some crevice and buried beneath the sand and rubbish churning about in the water. So there he lies to this day, walled in the dam.

The apron almost rivaled the main structure in size and solidity. It had the same slope as the upper part and a base of fifty feet. Down this the water slipped with a mellow roar, quite gentle beside the heavy pounding of earlier days, and the loose windows and doors of the neighborhood trembled no more at the dam's mighty pulsations.

Many foreign laborers came to Holyoke while the dam was being built and they made for themselves quite a village of little shanties on the ground now given up to Prospect Park and the region back of it. This village was known as "The Patch," or "Black Patch," or "Black Shanties." It was an interesting community and had many

peculiar characteristics. A shanty was built by putting up four upright posts, to which rough boards were nailed, and then a roof of overlapping boards was put on top, places cut for a door and for two or three little half windows, and finally a lot of turf was cut and piled up to the eaves all about. A man would come into town in the morning, buy a thousand feet of hemlock boards and have his shanty up by night, and the next morning he would be ready to go to work on the dam and take boarders. Inside the shanty the earth was smoothed, scantling laid and a rude floor of boards put down. Underneath a little hole was dug for a cellar and a trap-door cut in the boards to get at it. A place was sawed in the roof and a bit of tin tacked about it and the stovepipe run through into the open air. Under the V of the roof was a loft, reached by a rough ladder, where the boarders slept. A partition of boards, or in some instances only an old blanket, usually cut in two the lower room. On one side was a sleeping apartment, on the other the kitchen. In the loft were no beds, but there was plenty of straw and here the boarders lay something after the manner of sardines in a box.

Board was rated at three dollars each per week. The food served was plenty and good, if not esthetic in its nature, and included mainly hog's head, corned beef, pork, coffee, bread and "paraties." Most of the shanties were little affairs, but there was one with a length of forty feet, where thirty boarders were kept. The houses were ranged along irregular and narrow streets about which the hogs, hens and goats roamed at will, picking up the refuse. Behind the houses were little hovels for these creatures, though it is possible that in some cases they lived right with the family. The women of the neighborhood, as well as the children, were quite apt to go barefoot as long as mild weather lasted. Many houses were whitewashed within and kept with great neatness.

The inhabitants of "The Patch" came from various counties of Mother Ireland and a clannish feeling seemed to prevail among those who came from the same region, which led to some desperate fights. Still, though quite free in the use of a shillalah and quick to anger, after a row the combatants were apt to be very good friends. While one of these diversions was going on the place was just about as safe as a powder mill, and those who were outside at such times were very sure to keep outside. Then there were family troubles. A man and

his wife, and quite likely the children, too, would be all in a turmoil of slapping and screeching. But it was best to let these things settle in their own way, for if an outsider interfered, they would all turn around and give him "a most awful licking."

In the summer of 1849, when the dam was nearing completion, cholera broke out in "The Patch." It was very hot, the little village was crowded and the surroundings of the buildings were in many cases quite unclean. This and the salt food which they ate, which inclined them to drink great quantities of river water, brought on an epidemic. It made quick work. A man would be taken sick in the night and be dead before daylight. Whole families were swept away. There being no Catholic cemetery in Holyoke in those days, the dead were carried to Chicopee.

Religion, which up to this time they had little use for, assumed importance on the breaking out of the cholera, and soon regular Catholic services were begun in the old Exchange Hall, then just built, though in the summer previous occasional services had been conducted under a large elm tree which stood in a pasture where is now the corner of Dwight and Elm streets.

Father John O'Callaghan was the first parish priest and started the building of St. Jerome's Church in 1856, having, as he said, "raised ten thousand dollars from friends throughout the valley, including quite a number of Protestants." At one time he became involved in a controversy with Rev. Mr. Walker, pastor of the Second Congregational Church, and is said to have more than held up his end of it. He did not believe in hired pew sittings, but held that all should have the opportunity to worship without price and should contribute to the full measure of their ability.

The cholera lasted but a few weeks and a little later the dam was finished and proved a complete success.

After the dam was finished business began to boom, there were big mills going up, houses multiplying along the newly laid out streets, and the enthusiasts thought the place would be a city inside of five years. But in 1856 dull times came, the big Lyman mills were shut down all winter and property owners of the vicinity were in the depths of despondency. The entire store trade on High Street could have been cared for by a single person. Time hung heavy on the merchants' hands and on pleasant days you would usually find a group of



them in an open lot in the vicinity pitching quoits while they watched for customers. On one day the proprietor of a certain shoe store remembers that he had but a single interruption, when he made a sale of one cent's worth of shoe strings. On another day it had happened that there had been a light rain during the night, just enough to wet down the dust, and toward noon one of the merchants observed that a



HOLY CROSS CHURCH, HOLYOKE

single wheel track had traversed High Street. That was the only team that had been on the street that morning. He called together his brother merchants to consider the matter. A committee was appointed to investigate and find out what the man's business might have been, though there were those who thought he was not on business at all, but simply out for pleasure.

More than one man lost his all by buying land when the town was on the boom, which later became next to worthless on his hands. One



example was that of the Chapin Brothers, who had a store at "Baptist Village." It was a general country store and took farm produce in exchange and was doing quite a thriving business. They were bankers as well in a small way, taking such moneys as the farmers of the region chose to leave with them and paying interest thereon. This firm, in expectancy of the city's rapid growth, bought up a tract north of South Street and east of their village, known as "The Plain," and built on it half a dozen small houses. But they had made a miscalculation and they presently failed. This failure made a great commotion, as owing to their banking business the whole community in the west part of the town was more or less involved.

Exposed windows in vacant buildings were a temptation to the boys of those days and the glass of these dwellings was broken by the stones they threw, and the uncared-for houses which had to wait twenty years for occupants made a dismal looking group.

It is remembered that in these dull years just preceding the war the Hamilton House, then known as the Holyoke House, was offered for sale for \$20,000. It had just been built at a cost of \$110,000, but no buyers could be found even at the price quoted.

The system of canals as first constructed differed considerably from the present system. There was an upper level canal taking water from the bulkhead at the dam and extending nearly south for half a mile. Parallel to this was a raceway canal on a lower level four hundred feet distant and between the two were many passages for water which was sufficient in each instance to turn a powerful water-wheel. A second canal furnished water to mills on the lower side and emptied into the river. Locks for the passage of boats connected all these canals with the river.

While the dam and canals were being built five hundred men were making a reservoir on the hill capable of holding 3,000,000 gallons of water, which was pumped from the river and which served the town until more was needed in 1872. The Manchester Grounds were supplied from a spring not far away, the title being the Mt. Tom Aqueduct Company.

Before the completion of the dam the growth of the village was such that many talked of separation from the town of West Springfield. In 1849, at a meeting held in the village, it was decided to ask the next Legislature to divide the town and call the new part

Hampden. The community had already been called Ireland Depot, New City and Hampden City. The Legislature incorporated the town March 14, 1850, and called it Holyoke, after the mountain up the river which had received its name from Elizur Holyoke, an early resident of the valley.

At the time the dam and canals were building, Baptist Village, two miles distant, was losing its importance and Holyoke soon absorbed it. One factory had already been built and another was in process of construction; tenement houses had been erected by the Hadley Falls Company, gangs of men with teams were grading the surface of the ground and laying out streets and private individuals were building many houses and stores. Business and professional men were coming in and in the summer of 1850 there were thirteen persons and corporations each paying taxes on \$10,000 and over. In that year also the first waterwheel run by water from the great dam was set in motion and the first work done in Factory No. 1 of the Hadley Falls Company.

Moses Pomeroy, who lived with his brother Phœbus on a mountain farm, had an imaginative disposition and a turn of humor. He must have lived until about 1850. One of his claims was that rattlesnakes were so thick sometimes on his farm that it was impossible to hay and that he went out one day with a dump cart and pitched in a writhing load of them which he carried home and fed to the pigs. Moses' rattlesnake tale had some basis of truth for in the late 'fifties twenty-six rattlesnakes were killed at one time at the mouth of Snake Den in the trap rock.

In Exchange Hall concerts, lectures and public meetings were held for many years. It was headquarters for the velocipede craze when it was at its height and staid citizens would pay fifty cents for the privilege of whirling around the hall and taking a flying dive when they tried to make a sharp turn. The velocipede was a forerunner of the later high-wheel bicycle. It looked somewhat like a modern low bicycle, except that it was crudely built with wooden wheels and iron tires. The pedals were on the front wheel. After riding it a person usually called it a "boneshaker" instead of a velocipede. A high speed could not be attained even on a smooth, level surface and it was practically impossible to ride up hill.

Human nature was much the same in the late 'fifties and 'sixties as now, for it is related how a green employee from Vermont was sent from one store to another for ten cents' worth of "white lamp-black." He finally returned, announcing that he "couldn't get a durned bit on't in town."

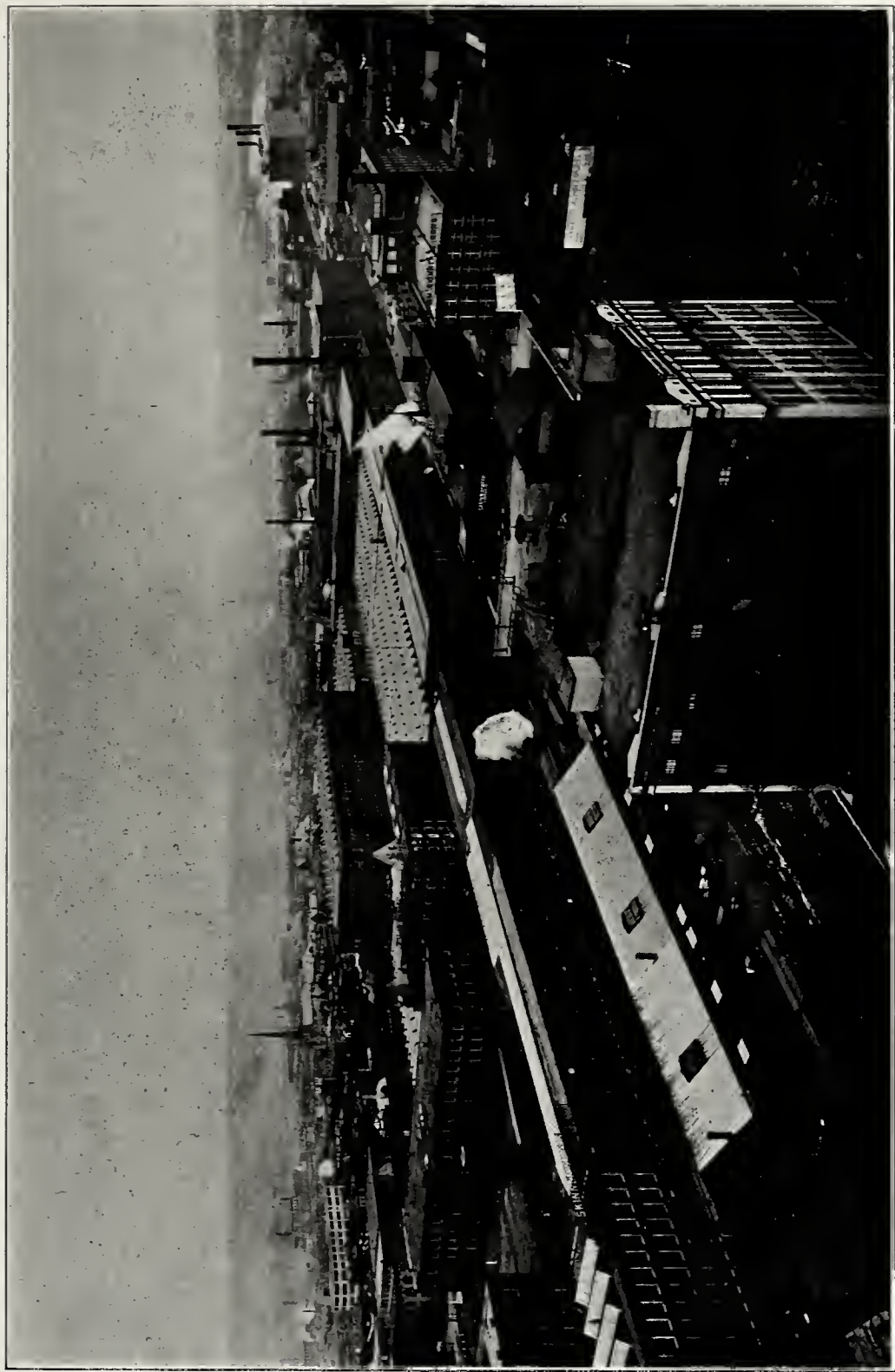
Holyoke furnished about four hundred soldiers during the Civil War and Jasper Harris, of Holyoke, wrote the following account of his impressions of Andersonville Prison:

"We arrived at the Andersonville station at dark on the evening of May 9, 1864. The next morning we were marched toward the stockade, a quarter of a mile away. Just before arriving at the main gate we came to a rise of ground from which could be seen the whole stockade and most of the inside of it. I shall never forget the gloomy and depressed feeling with which I looked on the horrible sight. The high log stockade was composed of straight young pines, cut sixteen feet long, hewn on two sides, the bark peeled off, and then the log sunk on end in a trench six feet deep, close together, leaving ten feet at least above ground on the inside. Crosspieces were spiked to each timber horizontally, making a fence strong enough to hold cattle instead of men.

"Rations were issued daily, being drawn into the stockade by a mule team, and when divided and sub-divided furnished each man a pint and a half of cob meal and from two to four ounces of bacon. For a few days we received two common sized sticks of cord wood to be divided among ninety men.

"If I should attempt to write a complete description of Andersonville and its horrors, of Wirtz, his guards and his bloodhounds, and all the sights and incidents which came under my own eye there and at other prisons during my eight months' stay, of the murders and robberies amongst our own men, of the hanging of six of them by a court of our own men—it would fill the pages of a large book, while a part would be descriptive of such monstrous cruelty and so striking to sensitive minds that I am afraid it could not be believed if written."





PART OF INDUSTRIAL SECTION, HOLYOKE



Dr. Long, a physician in Holyoke, was famous for his vapor baths, a most ingenious contrivance by which the patient was stripped, wrapped in blankets and placed over a kiln of hot stones on which were thrown vinegar and other medicinal liquids so that hot, pungent vapors slowly rose about the patient.

Whiting Street was associated with four other men in the boating business. He was a unique New England character of great sagacity, though many are apt to think of him as a sordid lifelong miser whose deathbed charity redeemed him. But Whiting Street, though he had some traits common to misers, such as careful hoarding of wealth and extreme parsimony in personal expenditure, was far from being one. His table always abounded with good, wholesome food and people who worked there or dined temporarily never complained of quantity or quality. He loved to accumulate money for the joy of accumulation rather than for what it would bring, which gave the public a false perspective. But when the subscription for the founding of the Massachusetts Agricultural College was started and Whiting Street was called on he headed the list with five thousand dollars. The cause appealed to him.

He was a judge of men and not narrow in his business dealings. A successful young merchant bargained with him for the larger part of what is now the Highlands back in 1864 for about \$6,500. Agreeing on the price he said to Mr. Street: "I don't like to give back a mortgage, but I'll get an endorser or several of them for my note." "Jim," said Uncle Whiting, "I don't want any endorser. I just want your note." This man who worked so hard and lived so simply left his possessions to the "worthy poor" of the regions with which he was familiar. Not to the Protestant or the Catholic, or the native American or the Irish poor, not to white or black, just the "worthy poor." When the will was made public the "Springfield Republican" rose to the occasion with an appreciative editorial that was a classic.

There was a swing ferry between Holyoke and South Hadley Falls which was one of the most ingenious schemes ever developed along that line. No other ferry on the Connecticut River was like it, though there was said to be a similar one in Pennsylvania. The ferry was located a short distance below the present South Hadley Falls Bridge, where the river suddenly narrows to form a neck of water. Because of this natural formation of the river the current

is considerably stronger there than at wider points and has equal force from one bank to the other. The swing ferry could never have been operated had it not been for this phenomenon, since it required a strong current all the way across even at low water.

A wooden pole perhaps fifty feet high was sunk in the middle of the stream. A pier of stone was placed on the upper side to form a breakwater in the winter time when the ice rushed down against it. A long wire cable about the thickness of a man's little finger stretched from the pole to the ferry. It was so arranged that it could slide along a frame on one side of the boat, fastened at either end, depending on which side of the river the ferry was headed for. The boat was placed diagonally against the current and the force of the water pressing against it sent it across to the opposite bank. An oarsman stood at the back to direct proceedings and to make sure the boat did not go too far down stream. An ingenious contrivance guarded against this, however. A box containing a coiled spring was placed at the point where the wire joined the ferry. If the boat got downstream too far so that the pressure became too great and strained, the spring broke and a bell rang to warn the oarsman. He then steered the ferry upstream to the right position.

Sometimes the wire broke and the boat was swept down the river with the current. In such a case it had to be poled back to its starting place. While most horses did not mind the regular trip very much, they were often quite excited when the boat broke loose. Nor was it only the four-footed passengers that were seized with fear at such a time and felt a great relief when they once more reached solid land.

The boat was a flat scow carrying a maximum of six double teams, three in a row. A bench was fastened on one side for the foot passengers. In order to protect against anyone falling overboard, a chain was placed across the front and rear. There was no back on the bench, however, and one old-timer tells of being scared by a restless horse and falling backward into the icy river.

The fare was ten cents for a single team, twelve cents for a double team and three cents for a foot passenger. The swing ferry was a good business proposition, since it was a simple and inexpensive contrivance to maintain and there was no other way to cross the river between the Hockanum Ferry at the foot of Mt. Holyoke on the

north and Chicopee Bridge on the south. Consequently the ferry was loaded on every trip.

The business was incorporated with Sampel Snell, Mosely Smith and the Connecticut River Railroad included among the stockholders. One other stockholder, who lived in South Hadley Falls near the river, used to sit in the window of his home with a spy glass all day long checking up on the number of passengers to make sure the records were being kept straight. The swing ferry was a landmark for many years, but was gladly abandoned with the building of the bridge.

There is not another city in the East that can show such swift and at the same time substantial growth as Holyoke enjoyed during the two decades following the Civil War. In a few years it became the greatest papermaking center of the country. Travel soon outgrew ferry accommodations and sometimes there would be fifty, sixty and even eighty two-horse teams patiently waiting a chance to cross to Holyoke, with an equal number waiting to make the reverse trip. In 1870 a petition for a bridge signed by 1,500 citizens of Holyoke and surrounding towns was sent to the Legislature. When a committee from there came to inspect the site a roaring flood had swept away the ferry boat and all the visitors could do was to wave their hands at the crowd assembled on the South Hadley side. A bridge 1,600 feet long was opened for travel in 1872. While it was being built and the water was low in the summer, teams sometimes drove across on the river bed. The original bridge was shaky and teams weren't allowed to go faster than a walk. The Granby and South Hadley milkmen didn't always observe the regulations at three o'clock in the morning and about once a year a policeman would be stationed there on a night shift and the police court in the morning would resemble a dairy convention.

The next big piece of work was the building of the Holyoke and Westfield Railroad at a time when the population was only 10,000. Bonds were issued by the town and the road completed in 1871. An excursion train was run from Northampton on the opening day and such was the rejoicing it was reported that there were only two sober men in the crowd.

The want of an adequate water supply prevented suburban development for some time. A season of drought came in 1871, the pumping machinery of the reservoir works broke down and people went to





HOLYOKE PUBLIC LIBRARY

springs along the river for their drinking water, while the domestic supply was teamed up the steep grade in barrels. After considering five plans for relief, it was decided to take over Ashley and Wright ponds and once more bonds were issued and the work begun. The ponds comprised a flowage of one hundred and eighty-five acres and were promptly acquired with the land adjoining. Then came the question of a branch main to the Manchester Grounds, which the Water Power Company did not favor, but which went through and a land boom started. The territory nearly all changed hands on paper for speculation and when the panic of 1873 came most of the lots went back to be resold to genuine home builders.

An interesting character at this time was a German named Wagner, who had a parcel delivery business. In those days the vehicles were called "job wagons" and the man lettered his wagon himself, spelling it "Gob Wagon," much to the delight of the boys.

Many of the leading citizens of Holyoke had a part in the establishment of the library in 1870. It was housed in the Appleton Street School and the first librarian was Miss Sarah Ely, a remarkable woman. Not only did she have a complete knowledge of what the library contained, but an intuitive insight into what appealed to the youthful mind. Her selection was almost magically attractive to all classes. Some thirty years later W. S. Loomis started a movement for a new library building to which the citizens contributed most liberally, the two first gifts being of \$10,000 each from William Whiting and William Skinner. Mr. Whiting was president of the library association for forty years. The Holyoke Water Power Company donated a lot on Maple Street and a fine building was completed in 1902.

The Holyoke Museum of Natural History and Art, located on the upper floor of the public library, was opened to the public under the curatorship of Burlingham Schurr, naturalist, in February, 1927, after about a year of preparation on the part of the curator in getting together suitable exhibits and arranging them for display.

The Joseph A. Skinner case of mammals represents a typical swampy section such as may be found on the Mount Holyoke Range. A pair of exceptionally fine specimens of raccoons, one extra dark and glossy, are shown true to life apparently in quest of food near a pool of water. A muskrat is near the entrance to its home, and the burrow in the bank at the water's edge has been broken away to disclose a

nest containing four baby muskrats. Upon a log projecting over the water's edge is a baby porcupine feeding upon some choice bits of vegetation. A mink is cunningly stealing its way beneath the protecting branches as it searches for prey. A snarling bay lynx upon a stump seems to defy any interference with its liberty in the wild-wood. At the base of a small pine tree and almost hidden among fallen branches and rank growing ferns and grasses is a family of the almost extinct black rat, sometimes called woodland rat.

The William F. Whiting case of reptiles illustrates how turtles deposit their eggs in the ground and the fact that some species of snakes lay eggs while others give birth to young is well illustrated by a water snake with young and a black snake with eggs. The manner by which snakes shed their skins is clearly shown. That many snakes are very serviceable in destroying mice and small rodents is evidenced by certain specimens in the act of swallowing such prey. Frogs and other life of the swamps, as well as a great blue heron, are shown in most characteristic manner.

A beautiful winter habitat case illustrating native wild life in the season when our woodlands are mantled with snow and in which the setting depicts to a considerable extent the food habits of birds is in memory of the late Newton H. Russell.

Mr. Russell was prominent as an energetic and zealous worker in behalf of all conservation issues. Birds, wild life, trees and all the productions in nature were very dear to his heart and he manifested an interest for all things in nature in many ways.

One of the first large habitat groups to be installed in the Holyoke Museum was the black-crowned night heron case, presented by Joseph A. Skinner. A nest with downy young just hatched plainly shows the "egg bill" on the tiny young. Another interesting thing about these young in the nest is the variation in sizes. This showing of the sizes in the young demonstrates that the black-crowned night heron begins sitting as soon as the first egg is laid. Three, four, or five eggs are laid, the hatching of the young bringing about a few days difference between the first and last bird hatched, thus it is that one or two birds in all broods of the black-crowned night heron develop and mature more rapidly than the others in the nest.

In the William F. Whiting woodland case a green heron and an American bittern may be seen among the tall grasses and cat-tails in a



swamp, while close by on a water washed stump a barred owl is keenly scanning the surroundings in quest of prey. In a white pine is another barred owl, the mate to the one below, and this particular wise old bird is in rather dire straits, being forced to defend itself from an attack by blue jays. This battle in the woodland is made the more realistic from the fact that a lone crow is calling to his brethren, telling of this chance to enter into a general *melée*.

A study in the nesting habits of brown creepers and juncos is a habitat donated by Aaron C. Bagg. The nest of the brown creeper is well hidden under the loose bark of a paper birch and one must look sharply to observe it. The junco's nest is located on the ground at the base of a small birch and the mother bird is shown just about to enter the nest.

Other habitats include the nesting of the crested flycatcher showing the characteristic habits of this bird in using a castoff snake skin to fashion the nest in a hollow limb.

An exceptionally fine, dark and large otter was taken in South Amherst on June 6, 1931, and it is as fine a specimen as may be seen in any museum. When killed the specimen weighed twenty pounds. A Cumberland turtle was taken at "The Island" in the Connecticut River by Teddy Kozak, Mater Dolorosa School, June 25, 1932. It is believed this is the first record of this southern species coming so far north. A snapping turtle that weighed forty-four pounds was presented by Frederick Bach.

The Joseph E. Chase collection of several thousand tropical and native butterflies and insects is a remarkable display. The death's head moth of Europe, which has upon its back the likeness of a skull and cross bones, is described as having been engraved on tombstones before the advent of Christ to represent the resurrection of life. The Japanese beetle that is causing so much alarm among growers and gardeners, is spoken of as having been first discovered in 1916 in New Jersey. At the time only about a dozen beetles were found. In 1919 it had increased to such an extent that twenty thousand beetles could be collected by one person in a day.

The Gardner M. Sherman collection of Indian relics contains in the neighborhood of 16,000 specimens of implements of war, amusement, manufacture, surgery, art, ceremonial and domestic life.

From five hundred to one thousand boys and girls are enrolled annually in the Nathan P. Avery Wild Flower Contest and this is an undertaking that has in the past several years opened the way for thousands of young people to see the beauty and wonder in the works of nature.

Burlingham Schurr, the naturalist in charge of the museum, is sponsor for the following lists of the flora and fauna of Holyoke which, with few changes or additions, would answer for Hampden



SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, HOLYOKE  
With Skinner Memorial Chapel on Right

County. Starting in early spring and following through the season we have: Skunk cabbage, marsh marigold, dandelion, hepatica, pussy-toes, horse-tail, bloodroot, bluet, yellow adder's tongue, wild ginger, rock cress, Dutchman's breeches, common cinquefoil, early saxifrage, coltsfoot, rue anemone, shepherd's purse, purple trillium, yellow

rocket, downy yellow violet, sweet white violet, wood anemone, birdfoot violet, painted trillium, crinkle root, oakesia, dwarf ginseng, two-leaved bishop's cap, Jack-in-the-pulpit, common mustard, shadbush, common violet, arrow-leaved violet, Canada violet, field sorrel, goldthread, balloon plant, watercress, small bittercress, wood strawberry, woolly blue violet, black mustard, columbine, early meadow parsnip, moss pink, mouse-ear chickweed, marsh violet, round-leaved yellow violet, foam flower, blueberry, spicebush, white trillium, long-spurred violet, wood betony, daisy fleabane, Whitlow grass, swamp buttercup, star flower, showy orchis, harbinger of spring, Solomon's seal, early buttercup.

Wild geranium, chickweed, cypress spurge, red chokeberry, red baneberry, field chickweed, small-flowered crowfoot, robin's plantain, sow thistle, bellwort, Canada Mayflower, flowering dogwood, pale violet, mountain fly honeysuckle, barberry, pale corydalis, sheep sorrel, Norway cinquefoil, Indian hemp, pink azalea, wild coffee, common speedwell, mandrake, moccasin flower, blue lupine, nodding trillium, hobblebush, highbush blueberry, celandine, swamp fly honeysuckle, yellow wood sorrel, wild sarsaparilla, white baneberry, water or purple avens, small green orchis, cut-leaved toothwort.

Yellow lady's slipper, bulbous buttercup, English plantain, large flowering trillium, swamp saxifrage, water buttercup, golden ragwort, Indian cucumber, ginseng, dwarf cornel, sheep laurel, wild spikenard, cotton grass, white mustard, spring cress, creeping buttercup, peppergrass, high bush blackberry, bullberry, cynthia, red clover, wild stonecrop, ditch stonecrop, tall buttercup, climbing bittersweet, long-fruited anemone, Greek valerian, blue-eyed grass, huckleberry, sweet flag, spearmint, alsike clover, maple leaf viburnum, yellow star grass, cow vetch, large flowered bellwort, false Solomon's seal, golden club, dwarf blue flag, Queen Anne's lace, evening lychnis, yellow water crowfoot, wild asparagus, wild rosemary, poison ivy, frostweed, golden ragwort, sundrop, white swamp honeysuckle, bladder campion, spiderwort, lamb's quarters, long-leaved stitchwort, white clover, Clintonia, Herb Robert, King Devil, American brooklime, pink clover, ragged robin, hawkweed, devil's paintbrush, bristly crowfoot, dangleberry, shrubby cinquefoil, wild licorice, one-flowered cancer root, carrion flower, star of Bethlehem, hop clover, pitcher plant, American buckbean, arethusa, twin flower, American hellebore, sand spuny, fringed loosestrife, four-leaved loosestrife.



Blue flag, mayweed, yarrow, common speedwell, marsh bell flower, forget-me-not, mountain laurel, bush honeysuckle, old-fashioned wild rose, Deptford pink, lesser stitchwort, rhodora, cow lily, wild onion, tufted loosestrife, pasture rose, cow parsnip, bittersweet, meadow-sweet, white melilot, black-eyed Susan, self heal, rattlesnake weed, sleepy catchfly, butter and eggs, spreading dogbane, New Jersey tea, Hudsonia, wild lettuce, toadflax, starry campion.

Common fleabane, thimble-weed, charlock, nightshade, purple-flowering raspberry, squaw huckleberry, four-leaved milkweed, whorled loosestrife, alfalfa, partridgeberry, checkerberry, northern bedstraw, viper's bugloss, hedge bindweed, rough-fruited cinquefoil, pink yarrow, wild garlic, spotted cowbane, rattlebox, water hemlock, parsnip, day lily, pale spiked lobelia, great lobelia, evening primrose, great mullein, moth mullein, small blue toadflax, feverfew, swamp rose, common mallow, cow-wheat, shinleaf, large purple-fringed orchis, smaller purple-fringed orchis, coronilla, moneywort, four-leaved milkweed, poke milkweed, rabbit-foot clover, climbing false buckwheat, Venus' looking-glass, Asiatic dayflower, Indian pipe, chicory, bee balm, snow-on-the-mountain, water lily, hairy germander, upland white aster, Virgin's bower, ram's-head orchis, swamp candles, pigeonberry, rough bedstraw, tick trefoil.

Wood lily, steeplebush, bouncing Bet, double bouncing Bet, white vervain, sweet Cicely, green brier, hog peanut, stinging nettle, broad-leaved cat-tail, narrow-leaved cat-tail, blue vervain, agrimony, star thistle, hedge nettle, yellow meadow lily, calopogon, enchanter's nightshade, purple milkweed, mountain mint, fireweed, pearly everlasting, pale jewelweed, spotted touch-me-not, butterfly weed, lady's thumb, wild indigo, bluebell, catnip, pickerel weed, smartweed, arrowhead, pale St. John's wort, Culver's root, ragged fringed orchis, green-fringed orchis, early coral root, large coral root, false beechdrops, bull thistle, elecampane, Dillen's tick trefoil, prostrate tick trefoil, Canada thistle, monkey flower, Jerusalem artichoke, spotted wintergreen, smooth rose, sweetbrier, blunt-leaved milkweed, pipsissewa, motherwort, cornmint, bugleweed, Hooker's orchis, richweed, ground nut, thoroughwort, pinweed, elderberry, clammy ground cherry, milkwort.

Long purples, corn cockle, wild bergamot, water plantain, water purslane, tansy, Joe-Pye weed, Culver's root, lance-leaved goldenrod, sharp-leaved wood aster, ladies' tresses, turtlehead, downy false fox-

glove, meadow beauty, wild bean, Indian tobacco, hairy bush clover, arrow-leaved tear thumb, mad dog skull cap, thread-leaved sundew, spatulate-leaved sundew, round-leaved sundew, broad-leaved goldenrod, rough-stemmed goldenrod, beggar ticks, cardinal flower, fall dandelion, wormwood, climbing wild cucumber, many-flowered aster, heath aster, New York ironweed, late goldenrod, gray goldenrod, bog goldenrod, silverrod, stiff aster, Stuve's bush clover, purple St. John's-wort, larger skullcap, slender gerardia, seedum, fern-leaved false foxglove.

White panicled aster, Tradescant's aster, showy goldenrod, sweet everlasting, white snakeroot, bottle gentian, New England aster, fringed gentian.

A list of the fauna native to Holyoke follows: Spotted newt, two-lined salamander, dusky salamander, spotted salamander, marbled salamander, mudpuppy, American toad, spadefoot toad, tree toad, spring peeper, leopard frog, pickerel frog, eastern wood frog, green frog, bull frog, Virginia deer, bay lynx, red fox, gray fox, raccoon, otter, mink, New York weasel, cotton-tail rabbit, woodchuck, gray squirrel, red squirrel, chipmunk, flying squirrel, common mole, star-nosed mole, long-tailed shrew, field mouse, white-footed mouse, jumping mouse, red-backed mouse, house mouse, Norway rat, black rat, muskrat, porcupine, varying hare, brown bat, hoary bat.

The reptiles of the region are: Copperhead, black snake, common water snake, milk snake, checkered adder, common garter snake, ribbon snake, Storer's or red-bellied snake, hog-nosed snake or puff adder, green or grass snake, ring-necked snake, DeKay's snake, common box turtle, eastern painted turtle, spotted turtle, snapping turtle, musk turtle, wood turtle, Cumberland turtle.

For fifty years Dr. William Churchill Hammond has been a leader in musical affairs throughout the Connecticut Valley. He has been both organist and choir master at the Second Congregational Church during that period and has headed the music department of Mt. Holyoke College for thirty-five years, besides taking an active interest in many other musical events.

Dr. Hammond was born in Rockville, Connecticut, in 1860. His parents were thoroughly in sympathy with his early desire to make music his career and he received excellent training from the very beginning. The Hammond family enjoyed music and a tale is told of

a Fourth of July in the organist's boyhood when they all marched down the Rockville street, his ex-soldier father ahead blowing his fife in martial tunes, himself beating his snare drum lustily, and in the rear Mother Hammond thumping the bass drum carried by a brother. At the age of fifteen he began playing the organ in the Congregational Church in Rockville.

As a youth Mr. Hammond had a vision of bringing music to everybody, so that every man, woman and child could share in it, and that has been a part of his life work in Holyoke. The free organ recital in a small New England city was a new thing when Mr. Hammond started to work out his life plan. He has now given over eight hundred of them in the Holyoke church. While he was connected with the Smith College School of Music he gave fifty free recitals and the total number given during his thirty-five years at Mount Holyoke College is four hundred.

The full value of this to a small locality cannot be measured. Mr. Hammond has gladly encouraged local musicians to take part in his concerts and has brought in soloists of note to add quality and variety to his programs. In 1896 Mr. Hammond was instrumental in founding the American Guild of Organists, and in June of 1925 the degree of Doctor of Music was conferred on him by Mt. Holyoke College.

Mr. Hammond's love of his fellowmen reaches beyond organ lofts and church choirs. Personally one of the happiest and sunniest of men, in church and college he radiates a cheer and force that has made his choirs notable now for many years. He is very fond of flowers and always wears one in his buttonhole. He is fond of color, too, and may have a gay bit of feather in his hatband. His habit of writing his notices on the Mt. Holyoke College bulletin board in inks of the various class colors, so they will not be overlooked, has led to his using the same gay inks for his checks and letters. He is still fond of martial music and his rehearsal of a processional is sometimes very spirited.

The Second Church in Holyoke has heard much besides sacred music and concert pieces. It has heard the music of the people, played by a man of the people. Dr. Hammond is reverent to his art and to the church, but he is, after all, essentially human.

The farthest reaching single philanthropy in Holyoke is the City Hospital, which was first started in the mind and heart of William



Whiting. A friend of his was taken ill at a hotel in the city and there was no place where he could go, or any nurse to send to his care. Mr. Whiting gathered a group of people at his home in 1891 and as a result the City Hospital was dedicated, free of debt, on June 10, 1893. The Hospital Aid Association, composed of Holyoke women, was organized, and while Mrs. William Whiting was president, at a fair held on her lawn, \$15,000 was raised to help the work of the hospital.



HOLYOKE HOSPITAL

It would need many pages to tell at all completely the story of the work done by the Sisters of Providence in Holyoke. They have charge of a hospital, an orphanage for girls and one for boys, a home for old men and another for aged women. All this has been accomplished since the first two sisters came to Holyoke in 1873.

"Experience in Self Healing" is the title of a book written by Elizabeth Towne, who also publishes the "Nautilus Magazine" in

Holyoke. This self help magazine, first started in Portland, Oregon, has a wide mailing list, even going to the Fiji Islands, and its list of contributors is equally far flung.

John B. McCormick is a name that should be better known in Holyoke, as he was the Edison of his day. He had been running a small chair factory when his waterwheel gave out and he decided he could improve on it. An Ohio firm seized on his idea, quite literally, and he came to Holyoke, where he invented first the Hercules waterwheel and then the McCormick turbine, said to be the two best waterwheels in the country.

Quite a number of business blocks were built on Main Street in the 'sixties and the section between Dwight and Cross streets came to be known as "Rum Row." A church had been built on Cabot Street, which was the scene of a terrible tragedy on May 27, 1875, when fire caught the altar draperies and seventy-one persons perished. The fire chief, J. T. Lynch, displayed splendid heroism, standing at the door of the blazing furnace-like church and dragging out people from the heart of the flames. Holyoke is proud of his record. After the destruction of the Exchange Block, Parsons' Hall on Race Street was built and many a rip-roaring old-time show was given there. It also sheltered many a heated political meeting. The Whiting Paper Company's business had gone ahead with such tremendous strides that the big No. 2 mill on Dwight Street had been built.

The Allyns and Perkinses controlled the meat business for a time. William Nash, mounted on a wiry old mare, used to drive the western cattle to the respective slaughter houses. The "critters" were about as fierce as tigers to a man on foot. One yellow steer escaped from the Perkins' slaughter house and was later shot on Blandford Mountain. A pair of horns was exhibited with a spread of five feet from tip to tip. Much of this beef was butchered in the afternoon and sold for consumption next day and naturally was very fresh and very tough.

The city hall, for which land was bought in 1871, wasn't finished until five years later. The cost was \$400,000, a big project for a city of only 12,000 people, and could only have been carried through by men of great faith in the growth of the place.

Governor Washburn, on April 7, 1873, signed the bill incorporating Holyoke as a city and the first city election was held that fall.

The recriminations of the present day are weak and feeble compared with what passed between the advocates of W. B. C. Pearsons and R. P. Crafts, candidates for mayor. When Pearsons was elected by a majority of sixty-two the Holyoke "Transcript" came out with a cut of the most exultant, arrogant, loud-throated rooster they could find. Pearsons was reëlected and then R. P. Crafts had his turn, to be succeeded by William Whiting in 1878. Mr. Whiting, in his youth was quite an athlete and adept in boxing, getting instructions from a little "English Irishman" named Burke. It was said that "Big Tom" Sheehan was about the only boxer able to hold his own with the future mayor and Congressman. The most admirable trait of Mr. Whiting's character was not his great business ability, but the fact that he esteemed the humblest, hard-working man far above those of wealth and snobbery.

C. B. Harris was a strong character and most successfully conducted a store in the early 'seventies. He was something of a wag and at one time gave an organ grinder a dollar to play before the elegant new Hadley Falls bank. President Ranlet came out in high dudgeon and drove the musician away.

W. S. Loomis, publisher of the Holyoke "Transcript," sold out to W. G. Dwight and went into the real estate business and from that to the Holyoke Street Railway in the early days of the horse cars. John MacDonnell used to stand ready on Appleton Street with an extra pair of horses to couple on for the pull up hill. The street railway was a great market for the purchase and sale of horses until it was electrified in 1891. When the first electric car came up Dwight Street the sidewalks and windows were filled with people gaping at it. For a long time the cars were a source of terror to the country horses and some old nags never became accustomed to them. In 1893 the electrics went through to Springfield and the next year the line was extended to Mountain Park. This tract of over four hundred acres is the largest street railway park in the world. It has a casino which will seat 2,500 people, where entertainments are given, a dance pavilion, restaurant, merry-go-round and "Tango Dip." It has beautiful walks which wind through the gay beds of flowers and past the rose garden and lily pond, and it is a favorite recreation ground for both adults and children.



W. S. Loomis had long turned his eyes toward Mt. Tom, just on the edge of Hampden County, as a possible asset to the people of the region if only it could be made easily accessible. R. M. Fairfield had bought the summit of the mountain some time previous for the wood on it and was characterized by his wife as a fool for so doing. When she heard that Mr. Loomis had bought the property from her husband, Mrs. Fairchild remarked that there were two fools in Holyoke. The electric line from Mountain Park to the top of Mt. Tom, 1,218 feet high, was completed in 1897. With great satisfaction Mr. Loomis took his wife on the first car and remarked that he had been waiting five years for that moment. It is said that he traced out the route of the future railroad himself when he was on a walking trip with a friend, and that the bushes along the way were decorated with pieces torn from his shirt, as he had nothing else with which to show where he wanted the road to be built.

The cars which made the mile trip in seven minutes and fifteen seconds were built for going on an incline. Their names were, quite appropriately, Rowland Thomas and Elizur Holyoke, and they were beautifully painted, outside in blue and inside as near gold as they could be made to look.

A pavilion for shelter which was built when the railroad was finished in 1897 was burned in a fire of unknown origin on October 8, 1900. With it were destroyed many maps, charts and records which had been collected, as well as the telescopes. Immediately, however, plans were made to erect a still larger structure on the summit and soon a building seventy-eight by one hundred and eight feet and seven stories high was ready for use. Piazzas fourteen feet in width surrounded the first, second and third stories. The dome, one hundred and one feet from the ground, was covered with gold leaf and the observatory windows were of plate glass. There was a large dining room and an auditorium with ample stage.

This imposing structure was destroyed by a spectacular fire on May 2, 1929, and was followed by a comparatively small building which, nevertheless, is adequate for protection, for observation and entertainment.

Near the entrance road to Mountain Park the trustees of Public Reservations, established in 1891 largely through the efforts of President Eliot of Harvard College, have acquired a sandstone ledge on

which are various dinosaur tracks. These ancient footprints, lying within about 2,000 feet of the highway, are probably the only dinosaur tracks in the world which can be seen in their native setting and are easy of access. George E. Pelissier, assistant general manager of the Holyoke Street Railway, gave the ledge and the trustees of Public Reservations have bought sufficiently more land so that entrances and parking space can be provided. It is possible that a museum will be established here later. The Springfield Park system bought a large slab of stone with one footprint on it from a quarry not far away, and the college museums have other fossil tracks, but it is not likely that Dinosaur Park, dedicated to the use of the public in 1935, will ever have a duplicate.

There are a number of industrial institutions in Holyoke which are outstanding both through size and through tradition, and they have almost literally made Holyoke the city it is. As they grew, the city grew in size and in wealth, and the people of the city prospered. To the outside consumers who use their products, they are perhaps only names signifying the finest in their particular fields; but to those of Holyoke, they are busy monuments to the men whose vision, industry and money made it possible for them to come into being and take their rightful places in the front ranks of the greatest manufactories in America.

The Farr Alpaca Company came into existence in 1873, the same year that the town of Holyoke was incorporated as a city. The quality of their textiles early made itself known when the company, then only two years old, was awarded the first prize in competition with exhibitors from all parts of the world at the Centennial Exposition. This accomplishment, at such an early stage, augured well for the future of the company.

The policy of giving everyone connected with the organization all the opportunity possible was formulated in the very beginning of the company, when Herbert M. Farr and Joseph Metcalf talked over the advisability of moving Mr. Farr's small textile factory from Hespeler, Ontario, to some live American town and expanding. From that time Farr Alpaca has experienced over fifty years of growth, constantly adding to its mills and to the number and quality of its products. In 1923 the mill completed a 75,000 spindle cotton plant, which is twice or three times the size of the ordinary new cotton mill, and replaced

its out-moded power plant at a tremendous cost. Of late it has directed its activity toward rayon manufacture. An outstanding personality in the organization was Joseph Metcalf, who lived to see many of his theories, far ahead of his own generation, come to successful culmination. His central idea was based on the premise that the man who contributed capital to an industry and one who contributed labor or brains to the same enterprise, should have the same financial interest in the earnings. In Metcalf's time such a proposition was almost heresy, but he placed it in actual operation with such success that the Farr Alpaca workers on January 22, 1915, wrote: "The employees of the company believe this to be one of the most important steps which has ever been taken in the country to solve the relations between capital and labor." The letter was written after a week's trial and adopted at a formal meeting of the workers.

The Farr Alpaca Company has a direct and human interest in the welfare of its employees. The company provides a recreational auditorium for its 4,000 workers, who turn out over seven hundred and fifty different kinds of cloth, sometimes as high as one hundred different shades of each variety, and who use about one hundred and fifty processes in the making of the Farr Alpaca textiles. These people represent a great variety of abilities, inclinations and tastes, and the company has a diversified recreational program. The auditorium is the center of activities and there are held the dramatic productions, entertainments and dancing sponsored and organized by the employees themselves. The expense of fitting up and maintaining the structure is carried by the company and the building is in actual charge of the employees' Falco Athletic Association, which has one director from each department in the mill.

Aside from the auditorium there is an athletic field, a rest room and a community house. In addition, the company has established a dispensary with a physician and a dentist. This hospital arrangement, thoroughly equipped, was planned by one of the largest insurance companies in America. When the mills were separated on different streets, two hospitals were provided instead of one, each complete with waiting rooms, operating and examining rooms, offices, and well-equipped smaller rooms. At one time the company maintained its



own school for the benefit of those who spoke English poorly, and this school was held in the executive directors' rooms!

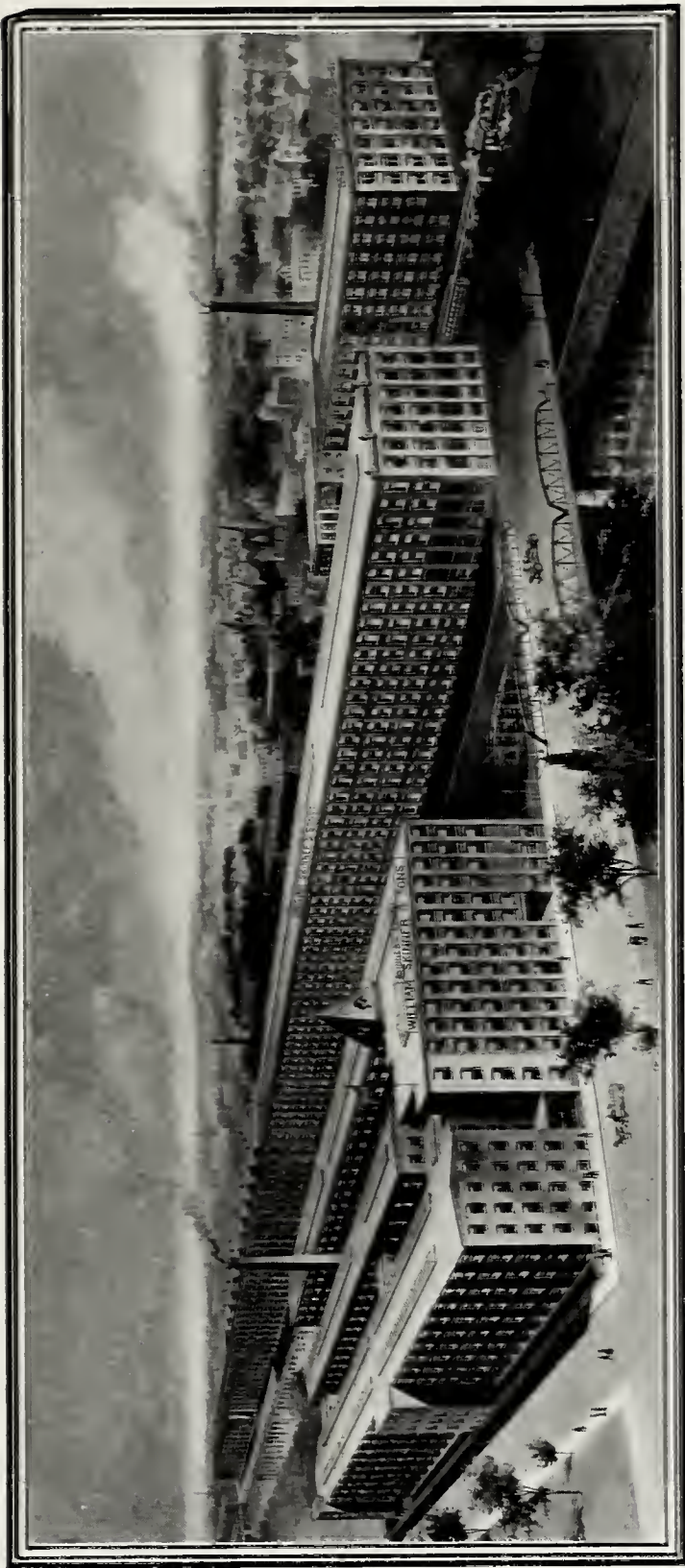
Joseph Loftus, of Greystone, Rhode Island, an expert on general textile conditions, wrote the following statement some years ago:

"The Far Alpaca Company has done more for the city of Holyoke than any other firm in many ways. Its wage rate is the highest in the world. Its general treatment of its help has been exceptionally good, and its interest in the welfare of its 3,000 employees is one of the best. I have yet to hear a single complaint of ill-treatment from any textile worker in the great plant."

The name "Skinner" has been a household word in America for three generations, wherever fine silks and satins are concerned. The trademark of the head of the famous old Agawam Indian chieftain, Unquomunk, is an indication of the perfection of the silk-weaving art, and these fine materials have been used at many a brilliant social function in colorful gowns and in the linings of coats and wraps. Skinner materials became famous the country over largely through the efforts of its founder, William Skinner.

William Skinner came to the United States at the age of nineteen with a thorough knowledge of the manufacture of silks. He established a small mill on the banks of the Mill River, seven miles above Northampton, and there began the manufacture of sewing silk in 1848. At this time the silk industry in America was in its infancy, most of the manufactured silk being imported from France and England. As the years went on business grew in accord with the quality of Skinner silk and a village called "Skinnerville" grew up around the mill.

A calamity struck the thriving business when, on the morning of May 16, 1874, Skinnerville was swept away by the bursting of the Williamsburg Dam, located five miles above the village. About one hundred and twenty-four acres of rushing water were released and swept down the valley, taking over one hundred lives. It was through the heroism of two men that many others were saved from the same fate. These two men, one the reservoir watchman and the other the driver of a milk wagon, raced their horses down the valley ahead of the flood to spread the alarm.



WILLIAM SKINNER & SONS, HOLYOKE

Many believed that the Skinner silk business had been struck a death blow through the disaster, as the mill had been completely destroyed and his home badly damaged. Yet William Skinner, in the face of these overwhelming odds, was not daunted, but turned his eyes toward Holyoke, and there he built the first Skinner mill in 1874.

From the time that business was again resumed, phenomenal success came to the company. The plant achieved mammoth proportions and occupied several city blocks. A single building 1,000 feet long was one of the largest silk mills under one roof in the world. Hundreds of Holyoke men and women were employed to turn out these famous high-quality fabrics, which are shipped everywhere.

The position of supremacy that Skinner silk holds is an accepted fact. Strangely enough, the very catastrophe that almost destroyed the industry proves today the quality of these fabrics. Farmers in the valley occasionally plow up bobbins of Skinner's silk which were buried by the flood over fifty years ago and although the wooden spools have rotted and crumbled away the silk still retains its life and tensile strength. Skinner's silks and satins were the first in the world to have their name woven into the selvage as a mark of identity. Skinner buyers accept from Japan only the full-sized and strongest raw silk and at the Holyoke mills every yard of fabric is inspected by three sets of inspectors before it is shipped.

The firm of William Skinner & Sons covers its rather limited field completely. For women's wear there are Skinner's crepes and satin crepes in a wide variety of rich colors. These materials are also made especially for lingerie and hats, and there are particularly strong weaves for women's shoes. In men's clothing Skinner fabrics are used in the linings and often in the lapels of dinner jackets. These materials are displayed in a showroom in the office section of the great plant and are also sold in a retail establishment directly to the Holyoke consumer.

The American Writing Paper Company is one of the few large industrial organizations in Holyoke which is not built around the personality and individual efforts of any one man. It is a business which has grown through mergers and combinations. This company makes fine paper products of every description; bonds, writing ledgers,



book paper, paper matches, milk caps and a host of other commodities of this nature.

In 1899 thirty-one mills throughout the country merged to form the American Writing Paper Company, with headquarters at Springfield, which later moved to Holyoke. At the time of this gigantic consolidation these mills controlled over seventy per cent. of the fine paper business of the country, producing papers which reached the press rooms of every printer in the country, and the Eagle-A trademark was known all over the world.

When the company was reorganized in 1927 there was an immediate centralization of all activity and a number of economies in the purchasing and handling of raw materials were put in practice along with increased efficiency in the production department. Advertised mill brands supplanted unprofitable overlapping grades and a ruthless campaign was carried on toward the elimination of all visible and invisible waste.

The Beebe and Holbrook-Wauregan Mill is a splendid example of modernized paper mill design, layout and equipment. The American Writing Paper Company operates one of Holyoke's oldest mills, the Parsons Division, which was built in 1853 and still produces nationally known and advertised bond paper of high quality. The Linden Division, built in 1892, is still a large producer of the well-known Acceptance Bond and other grades.

Although the bulk of the business and manufacture of the company is conducted in Holyoke, the American Writing Paper organization has branch offices in seven of the leading industrial cities. The facilities of the company for the manufacture of industrial paper were greatly augmented by the reopening of the Gill Division Mill in Holyoke, and the former giant book paper machine in the mill has been replaced by a thoroughly modern cylinder machine.

Much of the progress of the American Writing Paper Company is due to the fact that its twenty-five leading executives have an average of twenty-three years per man in the paper business. The knowledge which these men contribute to the Eagle-A organization has been mellowed by long years of living in a world of papermaking and in the heart of "the paper center of the world."

The plant now includes about twenty-four mills carrying 3,680,000 square feet of floor space, and the power, water and steam together,

amounts to 22,000 horsepower. The company has eight miles of railroad track to facilitate the distribution of its products. This great organization employs hundreds of Holyoke people to produce the tons of paper products which leave its various working plants annually.

In the field of sports Holyoke was already an active center. In the last part of the 'seventies the city had a baseball team that was considered to be the equal of any in the country, and the "Sharps" and "Shamrocks" were names to be conjured with in baseball circles. There were some memorable games with the Ware "Sure Pops" and the champion "Bostons," in which the Holyoke teams acquitted themselves well, some of the players later going to the major leagues when baseball as a sport swept the country in a wave of popularity.

An event of importance came in the middle 'seventies when W. S. Loomis gained control of the Holyoke "Transcript." There were for a time other newspapers, including the "Independent Journal" and the Holyoke "News," each of which had brief careers, but the newspaper history of Holyoke lies in the "Transcript." Many were the controversies thrashed out in it, one in particular being of a bitter nature when a disagreement arose between the board of water commissioners and the Farr Alpaca Company in the late 'seventies over the extra use of water. Mr. Loomis was an able and forceful editor and one controversy he had with Mr. Ranlet about a printing bill was memorable.

About 1880 the Water Power Company, increasingly progressive under the excellent leadership of W. A. Chase, built a row of brick cottages on Walnut Street, south of Appleton, and sold them on easy terms. The company also built cottages on Cabot Street and later on Beech Street. Mark Wood, an employee of the Farr Alpaca Company, bought one of the houses and found a customer for another. In a short time Mr. Wood opened an office during the evenings for the sale of real estate, and so prosperous did this field become that he left the mill and devoted his entire time to the business. Although others dabbled a little in realty, Mr. Wood may be considered the pioneer of successful real estate men in Holyoke.

The displacing of W. A. Chase as agent of the Holyoke Water Power Company in 1887 by E. S. Waters was responsible for a change in Holyoke history. Mr. Waters was a man of the highest char-

acter, but was not tuned to the democratic and progressive spirit of the city. Holyoke was going at top speed and its momentum carried it along for a few years at what was thought to be the same rapid pace as before, but it was inevitable that it must slacken under a rigid and harsh Water Power Company policy.

In 1888 came the great blizzard. The wind drove the sheets of snow through the streets of Holyoke in a horizontal line and that evening the city was a great snow desert. The following evening, after the storm had stopped, a fire broke out, and the "Transcript" especially commended the skillful driving of "Tim" Harrington through the mountains of snow. Another event of great importance took place during this year in the founding of the H. D. Allyn real estate agency, which seriously challenged the domination of the Wood agency by sheer skill and power of perseverance. This agency sold millions of dollars worth of property and like the Wood agency saw High Street property quintuple in value and the city triple in population.

It was in this year that J. S. Comins built Browning Hall at the corner where the City Bank Building came later and this building was destroyed in one of the fiercest fires the city has ever seen. Mr. Comins, the owner, carried no insurance, as he did not believe in it, and when the firemen and policemen attempted to stop him from entering the burning building, he knocked them down like tenpins until he was finally overpowered.

Further evidences of municipal prosperity were shown in the 'nineties. Three additional banks came into being, the Dickinson Paper Company and the American Pad Company had become firmly established, and the Mackintosh Mills had reached a high degree of prosperity. The Whiting Street reservoir had already been built by John Delaney, who had accumulated a fortune some time before when his dam at Florence stood while all the others were swept away by the Mill River flood.

There were two industrial failures at this time which shook Holyoke badly. One was the Keating Wheel Company, which was installed in the Mosher Building near the first level canal and the stock of which was reinforced by many dollars from Holyoke people. The investors were never repaid and the mill moved to Middletown,



Connecticut, to fail there also. The other was the failure of the Winona Paper Company in 1891. This mill had been called the "slaughter house" by expert paper men of Holyoke, because of its loose methods of manufacturing and selling, but the treasurer of the concern always kept a big bank balance and had the horse and carriage equipment worthy of a millionaire. The removal of the Coburn Trolley Company to Willimansett at the turn of the century was a blow industrially. This move was due to the fact that the company could not get a tract of land in Holyoke at a reasonable figure and many of the people blamed the rigid policies of the water company as being indirectly responsible.

Springdale had prospered with the street railway extension and Ingleside Terrace was opened in 1893. A panic came the same year which dealt Holyoke business men a blow, especially those in the building trades, many of whom at this time were Frenchmen. Gilbert Potvin, a well-known builder, was already wealthy and retired at the time of the panic, leaving Louis LaFrance, his partner, to become the foremost builder in Holyoke. It was due to LaFrance's efforts that the tenement system of Holyoke was revolutionized, with the resultant modernizing of tenement quarters for workmen in Ward One and South Holyoke.

In the period from 1887 to 1897 the municipal machinery was becoming more and more cumbersome. The city had grown to nearly 36,000 in 1890, and the old charter, with the aldermanic and councilor committees sharing authority with the mayor, caused a lack of direct responsibility and a consequent slowing of efficiency. After hot discussion fraught with much opposition from those against centralization, a new charter was secured in 1896. A. B. Chapin was the first reform mayor under the new charter, and in spite of some personal and political hostility against him, it was generally agreed that he was a competent man for the place. A cool, keen and determined man, remorseless and yet just, he brought the city out of a temporary financial slough and reorganized the city government.

Along with Holyoke's mercantile and industrial development came a number of distinguished men in the legal and medical professions. A notable lawyer of the time was William H. Brooks, who for years was president of the Hampden County bar. Mr. Brooks was once a guest at a papermaker's dinner and in the course of a droll speech

said his acquaintance with the difficult process of papermaking was confined to the manufacture of promissory notes, and though he thoroughly understood the process, he sometimes found great difficulty in "marketing the product." Another legal personality high in the esteem of Holyokers of that time was Judge Pearsons; and A. A. Tyler for over a quarter of a century was the city's most expert title searcher and conveyancer.

About the end of the century the new board of public works asked the Water Power Company for more favorable terms on a new electric lighting contract, as the old one was about to expire. The reply given by Agent Waters probably cost his company the ownership of the electric and gas plants. He brusquely informed the board that if the contract was renewed at all, it would be renewed at the old rates. This move on the part of the water company was strongly resented by the residents of Holyoke, since it amounted to a threat to throw the city in darkness if the price were not paid. A bill was introduced to the Legislature for the taking over of the plants and in spite of the bitter opposition put up by the company, the manufacturers and the local press, the Holyoke voters twice endorsed the proposition and it became a law, though litigation caused a delay in the actual taking over of the plants until 1902. The city was forced to pay a high price for a plant that was poorly conditioned, but this municipal ownership was vindicated by low electric rates later, after great expenditures in renewing and modernizing the system. Today the city of Holyoke is one of the few in New England which owns an electric and gas plant in successful operation.

The Highland District developed rapidly with the building of the beautiful Highland School in 1900. A teacher in this school, John A. Callahan, was long an important person in the Holyoke educational system and was noted for his high educational aims.

It was in Mayor Avery's administration that the city's spirit became more idealistic. There were few Holyoke parks worthy of note except Hampden Park, acquired in the early town days through the munificence of Jones S. Davis, and Prospect Park, which was laid out in the early 'eighties. Elmwood Park was finally improved and became a place of great beauty, but still the South Holyoke section lacked a natural breathing space until Springdale Park was acquired in 1905. Four years later the Jones farm was taken over and large

tracts of land purchased for public playgrounds. Two enthusiastic park men who did a great deal of fine work for the city in this respect were W. J. Howes and C. E. Mackintosh, and though their ideals sometimes proved too much for the public purse of the city, the work they did laid a good foundation for the Holyoke of future generations.

The new stone dam was erected by the Holyoke Water Power Company at the turn of the century. For a time a number of children were drowned by falling into the canals, due to insufficient fencing, but the company repaired the fences and eliminated the danger.

A peculiar situation arose during the last part of the century concerning territorial rights involving the long narrow strip of land from upper Northampton Street to Mt. Tom Junction, which includes Smiths Ferry. When the boundary between West Springfield and Northampton was laid out there was no Holyoke existent, and the narrow stretch was nearer Northampton than it was to West Springfield. After the creation of Holyoke the land was in the shadow of Holyoke, while it was about seven miles from Northampton. The jurisdiction of the latter city was municipal, but it owned no land or buildings on the property with the exception of the little Smiths Ferry Schoolhouse. It early became obvious that Holyoke with the greatest of convenience could take care of the section, while Northampton could do so only with difficulty. The Holyoke desire for annexation was natural, but the city, instead of petitioning for the annexation twenty-five years before, delayed until 1895, and Northampton, by a series of legal technicalities, defeated numerous attempts along this line. Northampton's position was a favorable one and understandable, although it reacted against the city of Holyoke sorely. The Meadow City received a large sum in taxes from this section, only a small part of which it paid out in maintenance, not having bound itself before the Legislature to furnish water, schools, sewerage facilities and other municipal functions. The Legislature, after a hearing at which Sidney Whiting presented the facts, finally frowned on this technical advantage held by Northampton, and in 1909 annexation to Holyoke became a fact, after \$55,000 had been awarded in damages. The controversy over this raged for a number of years and was the cause at that time for much ill feeling, particularly when Holyoke had to pay what it considered a "ransom" for the section.



A phenomenon of the beginning of the new century was the apartment house craze that swept the city. Hundreds of prospective homeowners in the industrial town became flat dwellers because of the large number of steam-heated apartments that were constructed. The "Flats," a tenement district in the lower section of Holyoke near the mills, sprang up, and here the mill workers were hived in profusion. There was also a racial cycle of mill workers. In the old days the "Yankees" worked in the mills and as laborers. They were followed by the Irish, who in turn yielded in great degree to the French. The Poles, hard-working and thrifty, came next, and took over the mill positions. Today, however, all nationalities are to be found at the machines and in the assembling and cutting rooms of Holyoke.

The beginning of the new century marked a great step forward in living conditions of Holyoke people, as compared with those of thirty years before. In the early days many of the people worked from six in the morning to six at night in the mills. Few houses had sanitary plumbing, gas, or hot water, and there were no telephones, electric cars, phonographs, or automobiles for convenience and pleasure. The hard-working younger men on Sunday, their day of rest, would go over to the island in the Connecticut to play baseball, and there would likely be raided by the police for disturbing the decorum of the Sabbath. The roads were in poor state, the jail was unliveable, and the schools were little more than wooden shacks. By 1900 these matters had all been improved and conditions for the mill workers, through social legislation and public opinion, became better.

The burning of the Windsor Hotel and block in 1899 paralyzed business in one of Holyoke's greatest fires and gave added strength to the value of property on High Street. Another large fire was that of the MacAuslan & Wakelin Company, in 1906, which stopped traffic for a time as the flames ravaged the building.

The Holyoke Business Men's Association had been organized earlier on the idea of banding together for the improvement of business in the city, but despite the hard work of its membership it failed to stay in existence. The Holyoke Board of Trade, later to culminate in the modern and efficient Chamber of Commerce, was organized in 1909 and served the city well, being responsible for much of the healthy and legitimate development of Holyoke industry.

The playground movement advanced when land located on West Street, Hampden Street and Maple Street was purchased for public playgrounds, and in 1910 the city government passed an ordinance providing for the control of the public playgrounds. A commission of nine members was appointed, three of them women. Important municipal developments made an appearance when the first pieces of motor apparatus were purchased for the Holyoke Fire Department.

The Holyoke Municipal Milk Station, the first purely municipal station in New England, was opened in a small shop on Sargeant Street in 1911 and the William Whiting School was erected on Chestnut Street in the same year. The Holyoke Tuberculosis Hospital was opened on a hill close to the city and the larger reservoir at Fomer was completed. The Holyoke Vocational School at the corner of Sergeant and Pine was also dedicated in this year.

The year 1915 is marked by a fire which destroyed the popular Empire Theatre. The beautiful Nonotuck Hotel was erected and the Knights of Columbus Building on Suffolk Street was dedicated. Another development of communal purposes and aims was the organizing of the Holyoke Rotary Club, the two hundred and twelfth chapter of this vast organization.

Holyoke responded to the call to arms with full strength and purpose. There had been a preliminary military furor in the city in April of 1916 when Company D was called out to duty on the Mexican border. On April 6, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany and the city buzzed with excitement as the plants quickened their production and preparations for establishing enlistment posts proceeded rapidly. Two months after the declaration of war, registration for service in the draft army was held at the city hall and nearly 7,000 Holyoke men responded. Holyoke over-subscribed its first Liberty Loan quota of \$2,000,000 and in September the 104th Infantry, including Company D of Holyoke, was mobilized at Camp Bartlett, Westfield. Holyoke's quota was 3,500 men in the army, five hundred men in the navy and seventy women engaged in war work for the government, and the entire city responded nobly, enduring the hardships at home with fortitude and aiding in great measure financially by over-subscribing four separate Liberty Loans. A tremendous parade and celebration was held in the city at the signing of

the Armistice and on April 29, 1919, Company D of Holyoke was mustered out at Camp Devens and returned to Holyoke, where they were accorded a great welcome.

An epidemic of serious fires broke out shortly after the war. The Second Congregational Church, at the corner of Maple and Appleton, was burned and another blaze did considerable damage at



HOLYOKE HIGH SCHOOL

the Whiting farm on Northampton Street. In 1921 the Judd Paper Company's building on Race Street was completely demolished by fire.

Another catastrophe came when \$30,000 worth of damage was wrought by fire to a large barn at the Brightside Catholic Orphanage in January of 1923, but quick and efficient work on the part of the firemen kept the blaze from spreading to the other buildings.

In the year 1923 two important clubs were formed, the Lions and the Exchange clubs. The Women's Municipal League became the



Holyoke Women's Club. An important business transaction affecting the business life of Holyoke was made when the Chemical Company purchased the land and buildings of the Holyoke Envelope Company on Main Street. Perhaps the outstanding event of the entire year came in the last of August and first part of September, when the great semi-centennial celebration of the city was held, with an historical pageant, anniversary ball, and mammoth civic parade.

The American Writing Paper Company announced in 1925 that it intended to center all its manufacturing activities in Holyoke. A momentous change came in Holyoke journalism when the Holyoke "Telegram" merged with the "Transcript" to form the new "Transcript-Telegram." And in the field of art came the news that Rose Desrosiers, a native of Holyoke, had made her operatic debut in the opera "Thais" in Paris. The Hadley Falls Trust Company and the City Bank merged, and William and Joseph Skinner gave a new clinic to the Holyoke Hospital. The entire city seemed to be undergoing a series of progressive changes and quick modernization.

The Lyman mills faded from Holyoke's industrial picture despite the liquidation of the company in a desperate effort to save it and the property was purchased by the Whiting Paper Company. The Chemical Paper Company started work on a half-million dollar addition and work was also started on the new Holyoke Water Power plant, while the National Blank Book Company announced plans for a hundred thousand dollar mill. The Marvellum Paper Company acquired the Whitmore Paper Company plant and a disastrous fire occurred in the Germania Mills with consequent loss of \$100,000.

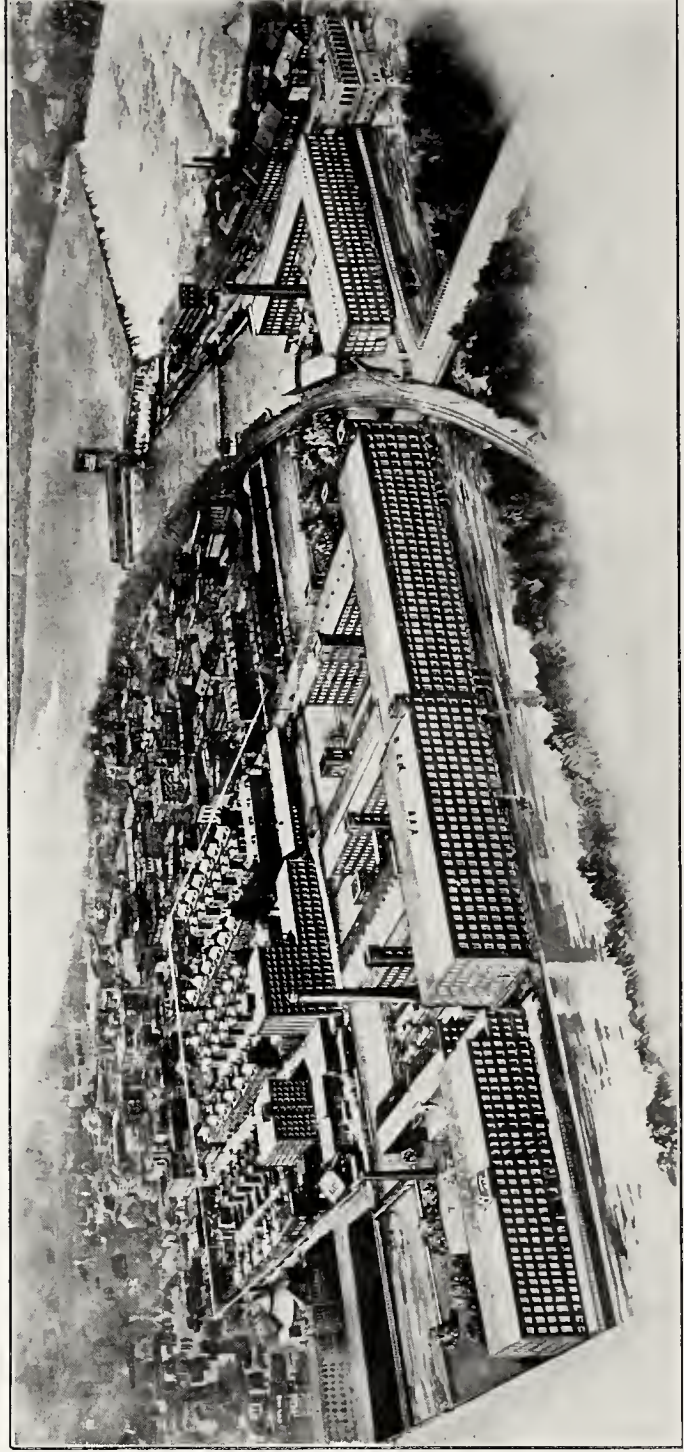
The worst conflagration in Holyoke's history came in 1930, when a \$1,250,000 blaze destroyed the Casper Ranger Lumber Company and did vast damage to the Farr Alpaca Company and the Skinner Mills and for a time threatened the entire business section of the city. Even the city hall tower caught fire, but fortunately help had already been called and the big booster pump from Springfield was powerful enough to raise the water to the top of the tower and save the city hall. The high wind and congested location of the lumber yard required the combined efforts of firemen and volunteers from Holyoke, Chicopee, Springfield, West Springfield, South Hadley, Westfield and Northampton to finally control the blaze. Another spectacular fire was the burning of the summit house on Mount Tom.

Holyoke people were in the meantime making names for themselves everywhere. Mrs. Russell W. Magna, later President-General, was elected Librarian-General of the Daughters of the American Revolution at Washington. Prescott Childs was appointed American Consul at Montevideo, and Jerome O'Connor, a sculptor and former resident of Holyoke, was selected to design the Lusitania Memorial. Many of the men and women who had been pioneers in Holyoke and influential in its progress and development passed on. J. L. Perkins, one of the industrial leaders of Holyoke was one of these, and William Judd, a veteran Holyoke educator, died at the age of seventy-five. Belle Skinner died of pneumonia in Paris while she was on a visit to Holyoke's adopted village of Haton-Chatel. In her will she left \$100,000 to the Skinner Coffee House, besides other large bequests. At Fruitland Park, W. G. Dwight, the publisher, passed away, and in Holyoke, Mrs. Catharine Shea, Holyoke's oldest resident and one of the pioneer women of the city, died at the age of 103.

A signal honor came to Holyoke when William F. Whiting was named United States Secretary of Commerce by President Calvin Coolidge in 1928. Mr. Whiting was the son of William Whiting, who had died in 1911, and the entire family was always keenly interested in the public and civic progress of the city of Holyoke. It was William Whiting who began the Whiting Paper Company, one of the largest of Holyoke industries, and who was a prominent figure in the political life of Holyoke and the State.

The first Sisters of Providence came from Kingston in 1873 at the instigation of Monsignor Harkins. For a number of years they were familiar angels of mercy to the sick and suffering of Holyoke, as they carried on their fine work in brick dwelling houses on Dwight Street. After some time the "House of Providence" Hospital was established, a building completely fitted out with pleasant and well-lighted ward rooms and all the necessary features of a good hospital. They were aided in their charitable work by the "Ladies of Charity," an organization of prominent Catholic women, who rendered practical assistance and formed a valuable accessory to the work of the Sisters.

In the 'eighties, when their property and buildings overlooking the river were burdened by apparently crushing debts, the Sisters through great sacrifices raised the necessary money to meet the payments.



WHITING PAPER COMPANY, HOLYOKE



They did all kinds of needlework, sewed flags, vestments and other garments and ran various bazaars. The sisters, in their collection of funds, made trips as far West as Denver, where contributions were solicited of miners. They were well received, thousands of dollars were realized, and gradually Brightside and Ingleside were able to exist on a firm financial footing.

In 1892 the Sisters of Providence, by a decree of Rome, severed their relations from Kingston and became part of the Springfield Diocese. This order is almost exclusively engaged in hospital work and these women are highly trained nurses and hospital managers. Under their administration come the large buildings set back by a sloping area of grassy land above the Holyoke Road and the river. These buildings include the Motherhouse of the order, the Beaven-Kelly Home for Aged Men, the Holy Family Institute Orphanage for Boys, better known as "Brightside," the Bethlehem Infant Asylum, the Novitiate and Summer Home, and Mount St. Vincent Orphanage for Girls, known as "Ingleside." The property on which stands the last-named institution was bought from a Mr. Holman, who on learning it was for the Sisters, reduced the price from \$12,000 to \$10,000.

New England's largest river is the Connecticut, which rises near the Canadian border and flows on south about four hundred and ten miles. There the journey ends in Long Island Sound. But meanwhile the stream has become a great river of much importance by increase from many small rivers that have their source among the hills and mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire. The river starts at an elevation of 1,589 feet above the sea level and falls nearly two-thirds as much during the first hundred miles. The greater proportion of the remaining fall occurs at Bellows Falls and Vernon in Vermont, at Turner's Falls and Holyoke in Massachusetts, and at Windsor Locks in Connecticut.

Many of the tributaries of the Connecticut drop rapidly in the smaller valleys and ravines, but the valley of the main river has a gentle slope that is celebrated for the fertility and beauty of the broad meadows on each side of the slowly moving stream.

Such characteristics have had much to do with the behavior of the Connecticut River during the changing seasons. Seepage from these broad lower valleys has tended to increase the flow of the river

during periods of drought, and the overflowing of the same large areas has retarded the flow and decreased the heights during times of flood.

Favorable conditions have been increased by the building of reservoirs on the Deerfield River for the purpose of storing flood waters to be used for the generation of electrical power.

The flow of the Connecticut River changes daily in quantity and, while there are high and low water periods, the records of the flow at Holyoke since the building of the first dam in 1848 indicate that flows of freshet proportions have occurred in nearly every month of the year.

Above Holyoke there is a drainage area of 8,400 square miles, the run-off from which must pass over the dam of the Holyoke Water Power Company or through its canal system.

The dam, constructed in 1849 by the Hadley Falls Company, was of the wooden type so commonly used in the lumbering operations in New England before that time, and although the construction may have seemed crude, the engineering principles involved were sound.

The canal system of the company was designed and partly constructed by the Hadley Falls Company during the period from 1847 to 1859 and the men not only prepared for extensive waterpower property but also prepared the plans for the present city of Holyoke with its streets 60, 70 and 80 feet in width.

The project was decades ahead of its time and because of its original cost did not prove to be an early financial success, and in 1859 the entire property was acquired by the newly-organized Holyoke Water Power Company.

The wooden dam gave excellent service until 1894, when the construction of a modern masonry dam was started. It took about six years to finish it. Completed at a cost of about \$600,000, although frequently called the million dollar dam, it was at the time the largest stone masonry dam in the country. The body of the dam is rubble rock laid in Portland cement mortar and the spillway's front upper and back surfaces are faced with large and durable granite blocks, placed symmetrically. Those heavy blocks placed at the spillway's lower end are fastened with iron dogs and those on top with iron dowels. The entire dam, massive and strong, is in great contrast to the timber dam, which formerly seemed gigantic, but now is relatively

insignificant beside the new construction of stone. Located but a hundred feet down-stream from the wooden structure, the new construction in reality buttresses the old, and between them the silt deposited by the river is slowly raising the river bed at that point. At the base of the dam the river bank is rock and not sand and considerable blasting and drilling were necessary in the construction.

The dam measures 1,020 feet between abutments and is thirty feet high from the river bedrock. Its granite facing is an insurance against the constant erosion of the river and the destructive abrasive forces of ice or driftwood. In the dam went the staggering total of 50,000 yards of solid masonry. Its down-stream curve is a truly parabolic curve and the center of greatest pressure comes about two-thirds of the distance from the top, depending on the head of water. On this structure depends the power for the various industries, including the American Writing Paper Company, the Farr Alpaca Company, the Whiting Paper Company and other large textile and paper manufacturing units, as well as a number of industries in the wire, machinery, pump, boiler works and belting fields. On it, also, depends power for municipal electricity.

The dam is located in a strategic position. At South Hadley Falls the river bends around in the form of a half-circle, creating a large, level peninsula ideal for the building of the mill city. The great volume of Connecticut water at this point, together with its fall of sixty feet, makes the Holyoke location of a dam the best in New England and the city has enough power available to almost double its present power output through industrial electrification. There are three different levels of canals fed by the dam gateways, and the various industries pay assessments, according to their individual contracts, to the Holyoke Water Power Company for power used.

The maximum of power is obtained from the canals as the water comes from the dam. For generations the water level in the canals had been balanced by the process of sluicing water from one level to another. This method presented no difficulties, but it represented a loss in by-product power. The water today is sluiced as before, but in passing from one level to another it is sent through generating machinery and thus permits the manufacture of electric power. This is accomplished at the Number 2 Generating Station, and here are generated many thousands of by-product kilowatt hours that would have gone to waste.



Continuous graphic records of the height of water passing over the dam are made by an electrical recording apparatus located in the main office.

During the days preceding the record-breaking Connecticut River flood in November, 1927, the executives of the company had accurate knowledge of the heavy rainfall in Vermont and New Hampshire and of the water going over the three large dams to the north.

Hitherto the greatest depth of water that ever passed over the Holyoke Dam was in March, 1913, when the maximum flow reached twelve feet and nine inches. After that time many freshets passed Holyoke, each with its peculiar characteristics, but in each case the crest was reached and the water level receded without exceeding that record. However, it became evident during the evening of Friday, November 4, that a flood of greater proportions than occurred in 1913 was about to reach Holyoke, for at six o'clock there was a depth of eleven feet on the dam and this depth was increasing at a rate of nearly six inches each hour, while the depths were also increasing on the dams at Turner's Falls, and at Vernon and Bellows Falls in Vermont. From these facts it was evident that an increasing flow must be expected at Holyoke for many hours.

The entire organization of the company was summoned at ten o'clock in the evening to combat the inevitable conditions. Empty bags have always been kept in storage at each end of the dam ready to be filled with sand and used to prevent water from passing through the gate houses located at the entrances to the Holyoke and South Hadley canals. Thousands of additional empty bags were obtained from Holyoke dealers and these were filled with any nearby material after the supply of sand was exhausted.

The force of men stayed on duty all night building barricades at the end of the dam and protecting the main power plant from an inflow through the windows. The sills of the window openings were seven feet above the lower generating floor on the river side of the plant and the windows were raised and bags of sand were carefully placed in the openings forming a nearly water-tight wall beyond which the river flowed at a depth of several feet for hours, but the generating machinery continued to operate all night without interruption. Had a log struck one of the window openings with any force the result might have been disastrous. Fortunately, the curve of the river forced all the floating flood trash to the opposite side of the stream.

At daybreak Saturday morning the water was still rising in the pond above the dam and had submerged the main tracks of the Boston and Maine Railroad; also streams of water began to enter the first level canal and were flowing along the railroad tracks. The Water Power Company's men had been working since midnight placing sand bags and doing other emergency work and it was evident that greater efforts must be made to avoid the serious damage that would



SAND BAG BARRICADE

Built by Holyoke Water Power Company to exclude flood water from canal system at South Hadley Falls, November 5, 1927

result from such an uncontrolled flow of water into the first level canal.

Local contractors were advised of the necessity for prompt action and with their help a substantial sand bag dam was quickly built across the railroad right-of-way, which together with similar dams built on the South Hadley side of the river, forced all the flood water over the crest of the dam. The river continued to rise until two thirty on Saturday afternoon, and then remained about steady at fourteen feet and nine inches above the crest of the dam until five thirty in the afternoon, when the water began to fall slowly.



The electric plants of the company continued their operations without interruption throughout the entire period and practically no damage was done to the property of the company.

It would be impossible to describe the conditions prevailing along the river during the hours of maximum flood. The pond above the dam appeared strangely changed. The tracks of the railroad were entirely submerged. Small houses formerly used as camps occasionally floated down to the crest of the dam and then entirely disappeared. The passage of such a vast quantity of water over the dam presented a terrifying sight, particularly at night, as it dashed over the rocky bottom between the dam and the bridge connecting Holyoke and South Hadley Falls. Along the Holyoke bank of the river below the dam the river surged back and forth dashing against the shore and adjacent buildings. While there was some damage to mill and factory properties below the dam the losses have not been considered of much importance when compared with the tremendous damage done in the small communities of Vermont and New Hampshire during the same period. As the water in the river receded the temporary sand bag barricades were replaced by permanent concrete masonry walls along each abutment of the dam and extending to both the Holyoke and South Hadley shores for the purpose of forcing future flood waters over the crest of the dam.

Permanent changes have also been made in the gatehouses leading to both the Holyoke and the South Hadley power canals. The masonry sills of all the windows on the river side of the main powerhouse have been raised to an elevation well above the 1927 flood level.

The first flood in 1936, one of grinding ice cakes, was an unusual one. The bitter cold of January and February had coated the river at Mount Tom Junction with a solid sheet of ice over two feet thick. On the morning of March 13 at the sharp curve where the ox-bow stream meets the river itself, a tremendous amount of floating ice cakes from up the river piled into great solid masses at the edge of the ice sheet, filling the river up-stream for a distance of more than a mile. This solid mass of ice measured eight hundred feet and more in width.

The water, which amounted to about 100,000 cubic feet a second had to go somewhere, since its regular channel was blocked by the ice. It flowed across the Hockanum meadows, inundating everything



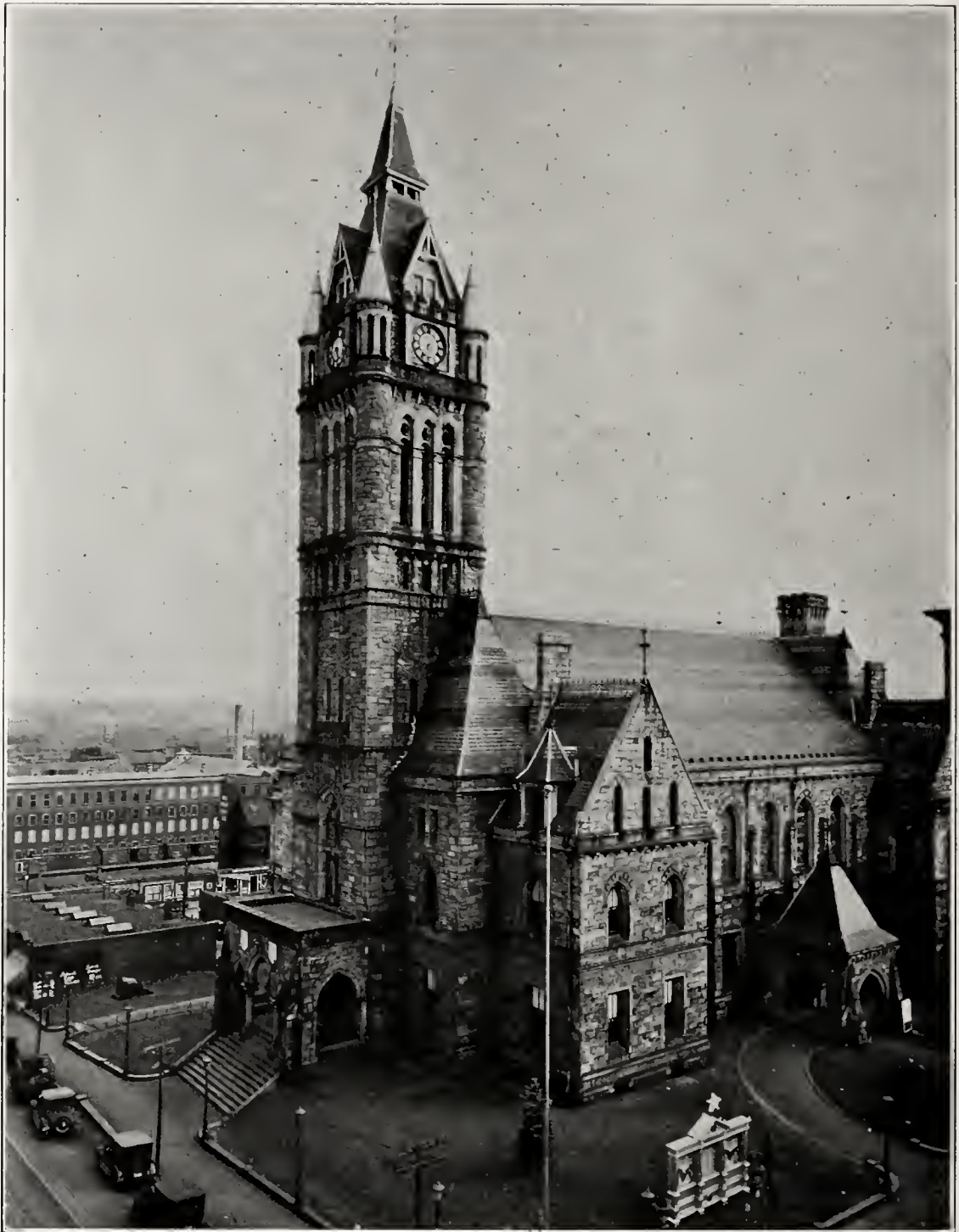
before it, and finally entered the river channel again below the ice jam. Large quantities of broken ice had come to Holyoke across the Hockanum meadows, but none came from the jam itself until somewhat later.

The officials at the Holyoke Dam knew that the ice would melt sooner or later and expected it would release a tremendous flow of water down-stream against the structure. They made preparations to sandbag the abutments at both ends of the dam, so that the surge would do as little property damage as possible. It was not the breaking of the dam that President Robert Barrett or Hydraulic Engineer Allan Ladd feared; they had the utmost confidence in the masonry as being able to stand up indefinitely, even under extraordinary pressure. The public was under the mistaken conception that the crumbling of the dam was the vital danger, but the real danger was the fact that if the flood waters came down in large enough volume they would overflow around the abutments and gouge out a new channel through Holyoke or South Hadley Falls instead of flowing over the dam.

News came finally that the ice jam at the junction was breaking and heading for Holyoke. It reached the dam after an hour's travel, averaging about nine feet per second in velocity. The first real mass of ice passed over the crest at about seven o'clock in the evening, and the entire mass, passing over the 1,020 feet of dam across the river, took an hour and a half.

Residents of Holyoke were treated to tremendous crashing noises as the ice broke up in going over the dam and the sound of it could be heard for much longer distances up to nine thirty that evening. The spectacle of the huge ice cakes smashing and grinding into each other was something long to remember. At one time a small house or woodchopper's shanty rode majestically over the dam and shattered near the base, leaving only a few jagged pieces of timber below.

The ice first struck the reefs of the old dam up-stream and in doing so the huge cakes were thrown backward a bit and buckled under their own weight, thus reducing the size of the cakes when they struck the crest of the stone dam. The public works department, as a matter of precaution when notified that the jam had broken, closed traffic on the South Hadley Falls Bridge until the ice had passed. During the ice flow the water remained constant at a measurement of about 9.6 feet above the crest of the dam, the breaking of the ice failing to change the height of the water appreciably. This entire ice flood was



CITY HALL, HOLYOKE

an extraordinary event, as no major ice jam has ever occurred before in this section of the river.

Although it was not known at that time, the dam had not emerged without damage. In the latter part of April officials of the power company found that a section about five feet in height had been taken from the crest of the dam by the ice and this section extended about eight hundred feet out of the total width of over a thousand feet. To repair the dam with granite blocks or concrete will entail an engineering feat in itself and it will be necessary for the power company to go to considerable expense before the full dam is restored.

The ice jam had spent itself on the fifteenth, but about midnight of the seventeenth the river again began to rise rapidly. This marked the beginning of a flood several feet higher than any known flood on this river. The officials, noting the uncanny rate of rise of the river, immediately made preparations for an unprecedented height of water for the dam to contend with. Sand-bags were brought from every possible source, and when the Water Power Company's men were exhausted and unable to fill and pile the sand-bags fast enough, Mayor Yeorg called on the Civilian Conservation Camps for help. To Mayor Yeorg's prompt action is given the credit for saving Holyoke from having a new river channel gouged through its streets and buildings.

The waters continued to rise all day of the eighteenth and through the nineteenth, until it reached a record height of 16.8 feet, unprecedented in the history of the dam, and millions of cubic feet of water roared down over the crest and into the swollen river which angrily was flowing over its banks all along its down-stream course. The record height was reached at eight o'clock on the night of the nineteenth and stayed at that level until nine o'clock of the twentieth, when the river slowly started to drop.

It is a popular misconception that the water measured 16.8 feet over the crest of the dam. The crest height is measured at a point about one hundred and fifty feet up-stream, and it is here that the gauge measurement is recorded by standard benchmarks. The river slopes downward as it approaches the top of the dam, due to the increased velocity at that point.

If a flood as great as the one in 1936 ever comes again, the people of Holyoke and the valley below will rest somewhat easier, knowing there is little chance that the Holyoke Dam will go out.





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*Westfield, or Woronoco*

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## CHAPTER III

### *Westfield, or Woronoco*

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The first white men who made a temporary abode in this region were attracted by the opportunities to trade with the Indians for beaver skins and other furs. At one period Connecticut felt she had a claim on the land and Governor Hopkins, in 1640, established a trading house at "Woronock," but the General Court of Massachusetts wrote him a letter intimating that he was encroaching on their property. As early as 1647 it was recognized that the territory now included in Westfield must be considered a part of Springfield until such time as the court decided otherwise.

Ensign Thomas Cooper seems to have received the first grant of land in Woronoco from the town of Springfield in 1658. He was a man of prominence in Springfield and one who did considerable dealing with the Indians. He was a practical carpenter as well as a farmer, a practicing attorney before the county court and at times a deputy to the General Court, and rose to be lieutenant before his death. He never occupied this grant, but settled in Agawam.

At a town meeting held at Springfield, February 7, 1664, Captain John Pynchon, Nathaniel Ely, George Colton, Benjamin Cooley and Elizur Holyoke were chosen a committee to have charge of the lands in Woronoco. This is an Indian name, which spelled as "Warwunockoo," is said to mean "it is fat hunting." They made grants almost at once to sixteen men, who were to build and settle and cultivate the land within a reasonable time, and do a certain amount of fencing. Three years later a warning was issued that some of the grants would be forfeited unless the requirements were met, and another committee was appointed to forward the matter of fencing.

The oldest settlement was on the north side of the river and was called the "Cellar Side." The name seems to have been given because of the way the houses were located, many of them against banks here and there, so that the lower story was exposed on one side

only, and consequently could be better defended against the Indians. George Saxton and Walter Lee, of Northampton, settled here in 1663 on Ensign Cooper's grant and John Sackett, from the same town, bought Deacon Samuel Chapin's grant, which lay next. It seemed natural for the Northampton men to come in here, for the old road from that town to Windsor ran through this portion. It went on to the so-called "South Side," where Governor Hopkins had early established his trading house when Connecticut claimed the territory. Captain Aaron Cook, who received one of the grants from the Springfield committee, built a tavern here in 1668. James Cornish, Thomas Dewey, John Osborne and John Ingersoll built nearby. The third village was called "Fort Side" and lay off the beaten track and between the streams. An old Indian fort had stood here in times past.

When the land was plotted it was divided into home-lots fourteen and one-half rods broad and eighty rods long and plow-lots of varying acreage. Some highways were four rods wide and some only two rods. Gates were established at convenient points for getting into and out of the fenced areas and a fine of five shillings levied on those who left a gate open during the season from March 25 on. There were no bridges, but the streams were forded at certain places, one of them being called "the neck riding."

May 28, 1669, the General Court made the settlement of Woronoco into a town and gave it the name of Westfield. This change was recommended and aided by the mother town of Springfield, which was rather unusual in our early history. "Streamfield" had been suggested as a name, but for some reason was not chosen. Then began the difficult task of determining the exact boundaries of the new town and securing from the Indian owners Alquat, Wollump and Wollamunt, a deed of the land. Seven acres were reserved "in a nooke by ye Little River" for Wollump, son of Alquat, as a fishing ground.

The settlement at the "Fort Side" was the center of the new town. Here a palisade of pointed tree trunks eight or more feet high, set close together in a circuit of about two miles, enclosed the houses. This was sometimes referred to as the "place of compact dwellings" and at other times as "the fort." There were some "forted houses" built outside of the palisade. These usually had an ample cellar, where the women and children might take refuge during an attack by

the Indians. Westfield was the frontier and the edge of civilization for over fifty years and consequently needed even more careful protection than was usual. In times of Indian uprisings guards were set about the palisades and because of its exposed position the town did not grow rapidly.

The settlers endeavored to be fair and just in their dealings with the Indians and there were strict rules against selling them firearms or liquor. Heavy fines were imposed, but nevertheless drunkenness was common. The Indians degenerated into dissolute vagabonds, a burden to the community, but they often were capable of outwitting the whites in sharp practices. On a bitter cold winter day old Wahposucum appeared at the chief trading post with a lot of baskets to exchange for "firewater." In jest the trader offered him for the lot as much rum as he could carry away in one of the baskets. The old Indian went to the river, cut a hole in the ice with his hatchet and repeatedly dipped his basket in the stream and exposed it to the zero atmosphere until it was coated inside and out with sufficient ice so that it would hold the coveted liquor. Stalking back to the trading-house he demanded payment and received it, to the financial loss of the trader.

Another redskin, whose wigwam was in the district later known as "Madagascar," had acquired among the whites the reputation of being a notorious liar. One of the good men of the town remonstrated with him over his tendency to falsify and said he should at least tell two truths to one lie. Not long afterward the Indian told this man of having killed a fat buck near Mount Tekoa and being unable to carry it he had slung it into the fork of a white birch sapling. To reach the spot one should go west three miles to a blasted oak, then turn northward until a big chestnut tree stood in the way. A little to the east of this the white birch and the deer would be found. The listener credited the story, gave the Indian a fair price for the venison and went out with his horse to bring in the buck. No deer was found and on the first opportunity the Indian was taken to task for his untruthfulness. He was unconcerned for he said he had done even better than the injunction to tell two truths to one lie, for the blasted oak was there, also the big chestnut and the white birch tree. Only the deer was missing and he had told three truths to one lie.



The site of the first meetinghouse was a matter of lengthy discussion, each of the three settlements desiring it to be located in their vicinity. Even after it was decided that it should be built on the "Fort Side," the lots were drawn only "after solemn looking to God." It was probably built in 1673 and is supposed to have stood on the north side of what is now Main Street, a little northwest of the bridge over Little River. The meetinghouse was about thirty-six feet square, fourteen feet high and "for form like the Hatfield meetinghouse." A central aisle led from the entrance to the pulpit and there were long benches on both sides.

Westfield did not wait for a meetinghouse before having preaching services. At first, John Holyoke "dispensed ye word of life," but "finding ye ministry of the word too heavie for him, desisted." Then coöperating with a committee at Springfield it was voted that "Capt. Cook shall go to the Bay to procure a minister," and Reverend Moses Fish came and served three years. A Mr. Adams from Dedham could not be secured because he was "not as yet movable from ye collidge."

Edward Taylor was the minister selected by the town soon after its organization and he served them for more than half a century. He came to Westfield in December on horseback from Boston, "the Snow being about midleg deep, the way unbeaten, or ye track filled up again, and over rocks and mountains." They lodged the first night at "Malbury" and the next day lost their way in the woods but finally found again the blazed trees and reached "Quabaug." Springfield sheltered them the next night and the following morning they led their horses across the Connecticut River on the ice, "mercy going along with us." He seems to have been an unusually able man, a writer as well as a preacher. He kept a diary through most of his life and recorded matters of public interest as well as private affairs. He was something of a naturalist and had also studied medicine, so he must have been of considerable value to the little town. A love letter of his, written from Westfield in 1674, starts:

"MY DOVE:—I send you not my heart, for that I hope is sent to Heaven long since, and unless it has awfully deceived me, it hath not taken up its lodgings in any one's bosom on this side the royal city of the Great King; but yet the most of it that is allowed to be layed out upon any creature doth safely and singly fall to your share."

The letter continues :

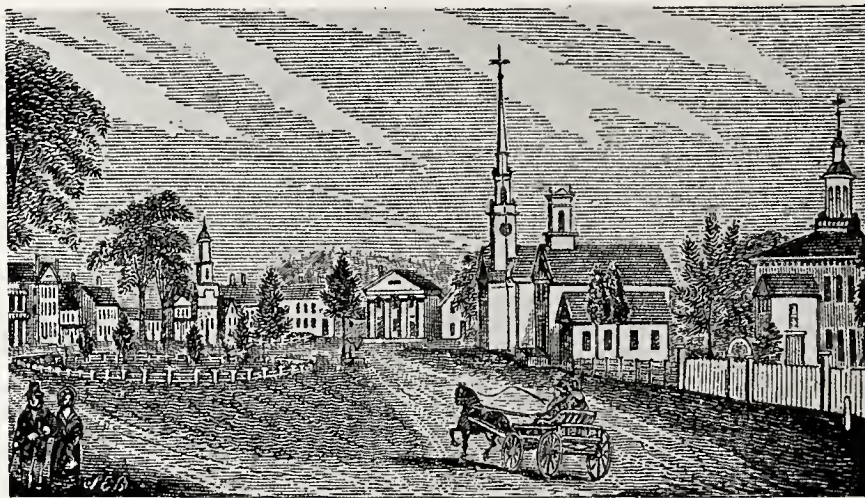
"I know not how to offer a fitter comparison to set out my love by, than to compare it unto a golden ball of pure fire rolling up and down my breast, from which there flies now and then a spark like a glorious beam from the body of the flaming sun."

The letter is signed "Your true love till death, Edward Taylor," and has on it this notation. "This is for my friend and only beloved Miss Elizabeth Fitch at her father's house in Norwich." Miss Fitch was the daughter of Reverend James Fitch, of Norwich, Connecticut, and Mr. Taylor married her before the close of the year.

Mr. Taylor was, like other country ministers, a farmer and his parishioners helped him in haying and harvest times and the women assisted Mrs. Taylor with her spinning. During King Philip's War he and his bride shared the anxieties and the sorrows of the colonists. Every night for many months they went with others to the fort, where a guard was set. For three years the savages burned dwellings, slew men, women and children and threatened the utter destruction of the English. Westfield was an outpost and seemed most exposed to attack. As a result of the terrible devastation, some towns were abandoned, and the council at Boston finding it impossible to properly garrison the remainder urged the concentration of the settlers in Hadley and Springfield. A letter received by Major Pynchon in March, 1676, says: "Westfield must join with you and totally remove to you, for 'tis impossible to hold both towns." Westfield protested this removal to Springfield in a letter written by Mr. Taylor, in which he depreciates the safety of Springfield as a garrisoned town, tells of what plans Westfield has made to more thoroughly protect itself, asks for thirty soldiers to assist and adds that sickness in the town still further complicates the matter. In short, Westfield refused to give up her homes and her lands to the savages and courageously, if fearfully, drew closer for protection. Events soon proved that they had been wise for much of Springfield was burned, and because of the loss of their cornmill they had to come to Westfield to have their corn ground at the Dewey or Whiting mills on Two Mile Brook. Mr. Taylor wrote in his diary of the burning of Mr. Cornish's house and

also John Sackett's house and barn and of other catastrophes, but adds: "Thus, though we lay in the very rode of the enemy we were preserved, only the war had so impoverished us that many times we were ready to leave the place."

It must, indeed, have been disheartening. Some discouraged men had moved to larger towns that seemed safer, a few had been killed; less had been planted than usual and some of that was not harvested, grain and other provisions had been levied for the troops, and soldiers were billeted on the impoverished households. The fight at Turner's Falls and the attack on Hatfield in 1676 were culminating events, but



OLD SOUTHERN VIEW IN CENTRAL PART OF WESTFIELD

for some time after roving bands of Indians brought terror to the people.

Nor were the Indians the only troublemakers in Westfield at this time for George Filer was haled into court for entertaining Quakers. He owned to the charge and also that he was something of a Quaker himself. That he had absented himself from public worship was another thing against him and this he did not deny either. His contemptuous speeches about the ministers and their work, "namely, that they turne over 20 or 30 Authors a weeke to patch up an houres discourse or two on the Sabbath," added to the fact that "He seems to be a very seminary of heritacall opinions," leads one to wonder why his fine was only five shillings, though the alternative of a whipping was surely severe enough.



The "cartway" from Northampton to Windsor, Connecticut, was laid out through Westfield and ran from four to forty rods wide, which allowed of considerable shifting of the roadway around bad spots. The trail from Springfield to Albany was also through Westfield and it was over this route the ransomed Hatfield captives were escorted home from Canada in 1678. Along this way during all the years of the French and Indian wars went horsemen and footmen and military supplies. General Amherst and his army on their way from Boston to Canada stopped one night in Westfield.

The early records of the church in Westfield in the writing of the Reverend Mr. Taylor are unusually complete and give a fine picture of the official organization and of his ordination. The churches of Norwich, Windsor, Springfield, Northampton and Hadley were called in as a council and the proceedings must have covered about three days in August, 1678.

Four men who had settled in Westfield received dismissal from the Windsor church and two from Northampton, in order that they might be members of the new church in Westfield. These, with the minister, were known as the seven "foundation men" of the organization. Each one of these six laymen had to make a declaration of his religious experiences which was called a "Relation." This drew out the proceedings to such length that Mr. Taylor records that "ye Elders and Messengers of Northampton and Hadley drove on to ye contrary." Whether they tired of the lengthy and involved discourses or whether their farming interests called them away, we do not know. Many prominent names are on the list of delegates from the five towns or among the visitors, and their faith and convictions are indicated in a note of Mr. Taylor's that they "did stickle more than was meet." But the "laying on of hands" finally was accomplished and Westfield started on its way as a mother of churches. No elders or deacons were chosen for thirteen years.

An early law of the Colony provided that every township of fifty householders should appoint one in the town to teach the children to write and read in order that the "old deluder Satan" should not keep men from the knowledge of the Scriptures. Just when this provision was first fulfilled in Westfield is not known, but a town vote taken in 1678 shows that a teacher, Mr. Deutre, was already at work and they gave him a house-lot and some outlying land. Mr. James Cor-

nish was the second teacher and he received the equivalent of £18 paid in wheat, pork and Indian corn for a half year's work. In 1702 Westfield showed its progressiveness by engaging Isaac Phelps to teach school for a whole year, instead of the usual six months, but they seem to have slipped later when they engaged Joseph Sexton, who wrote his own agreement, to "teach children to Reade and Wright so far as he is capassatated." The first schoolhouse was built in 1701. Those sending children to school were expected to furnish wood when needed. Girls were to pay the same tuition as boys "if they goo," but the tuition for boys from seven to twelve years of age must be paid "whether they go or not." The hornbook, which was simply one small sheet of paper upon which was printed the alphabet in large and small letters; a few syllables such as ab, eb, ib, ob; and the Lord's Prayer, backed with a thin piece of wood and protected in front with a semi-transparent sheet of horn, was early used. Paper was scarce and sums were done in the ashes of the hearth and on birch bark or wood. The "New England Primer" early became a standard and often the only textbook used. Its rhymed alphabet, commencing "In Adam's fall, we sinned all," and ending "Zaccheus he did climb a tree his Lord to see," was a favorite with the children, even though the "Shorter Catechism" did not attract them.

Isaac Stiles served as teacher in 1722, as well as assistant to Mr. Taylor, and two years later the town voted to provide a grammar school as well as a winter school for the people at Little River. The establishment of outlying schools spread as one district after another was settled until in 1825 there were seventeen to be maintained.

When the first meetinghouse had stood for forty years, a new one appeared to be necessary in spite of the fact that the old one had been repaired and a gallery added to make more pew room. Then began the usual voting and reconsidering and appointing of committees to decide the location until nearly six years passed by. What a relief it must have been at last when the "4 or 5 barels of beer" were bought and the drum beat on the eighth of June, 1720, for the raising. Eighteen months later they were still doing some work on the new meetinghouse, but had begun to use it. The people "on the south side of the Little River" were given permission "to build a hovel for their horses" nearby and this was the forerunner of the old New England horsesheds which later backed every church. This "hovel" was just for horses, as vehicles were not yet in use.

The old minister, Mr. Taylor, did not like the new meetinghouse because it was not built just where the old one stood. By this time he was too old to carry on the work of the parish without assistance and finally Mr. Nehemiah Bull began to serve both as school teacher and minister. Nathaniel Ponder was engaged to sweep the meetinghouse and John Negro to beat the drum for service. Fifty pounds was voted for a church bell in 1728. Mr. Bull married the daughter of Edward Partridge, of Hatfield. When the mission to the Housatonic Indians was undertaken, Mr. Bull accompanied Reverend John Sargeant to that place and baptized for him the first Indian convert. During the "Great awakening" under Jonathan Edwards and the English Whitefield, Westfield was deeply stirred and forty-five were added to the church in one year.

Indian troubles were not entirely over, watch was kept when men were working in the fields and occasional scouting parties were sent out to drive away dusky marauders. A party of Westfield men with loaded carts were attacked by the savages and one Indian was shot by Noah Ashley. He was scalped and the trophy sent to Boston in return for which £100 was received. A few years later the bounty for a scalp was raised to £300.

An old Indian named Greylock was a disturber for some time. He chose to take captive rather than to kill and was constantly skulking about waiting for a chance. He caught a boy by the name of Loomis, who thoughtlessly went out of the fort in the early evening to get cherries. Mr. Bentley, in the east part of the town worked at ditching all one summer. He uniformly set his gun one rod before him, worked up to it and moved it again and again. But the following year, in a moment of carelessness, Greylock got him. These and others were released on payment of goods or money.

Settling in a new region compelled steady and persistent work, yet the people were not gloomy. The very variety of their many tasks served in place of recreation. There were training days when work was suspended and all gathered on the common. The annual muster was a holiday and a big event with much visiting. Working the roads was done in company and a "raising" drew both sexes from a considerable area. Weddings were festive occasions and there were husking parties, paring bees and spelling matches. There were no sleigh rides until nearly the middle of the 1700's. The kitchen was



the workshop in winter and here shingles were shaved, yokes shaped and wooden implements whittled out. Food was plain but plentiful and supplied from the farm and the woods. Rye and corn made most of the bread and a frequent midday meal was a boiled dinner with a baked Indian pudding. Tea and coffee were luxuries and cider took the place of beer so much used at first. Hasty pudding with milk or molasses made a good breakfast. Potatoes did not come to the valley until about 1720, but turnips, cabbages and beans were in common use.

The third pastor at Westfield was John Ballantine, who has left behind an interesting diary. He was unmarried when he began his pastorate, but in September, 1743, he went to Roxbury, where he preached on the Sabbath from the text "Love never faileth." That was September 18 and on the twentieth he was married to Molly Gay and brought her to Westfield in a "chair," which was a chaise without a top. Some of the interesting items in his journal are as follows:

"6 men went out fishing, boat upset, 3 men drowned."

"Much cattle have perished this spring. A very melancholy account from the East that they have no corn to put in the ground and the people have to eat clams, not having any bread."

"4 Negroes publicly whipped."

"A girl killed at Hatfield. Thunder."

"A man stood in the pillory for making money."

"The comet so much talked about has been seen. The measles have been in every house but six or seven in town."

"Sunday, a bear was killed in the afternoon. Was it a violation of the Sabbath?"

"Sent for by Widow Wadkins, her daughter supposed to have ye small Pox. Went."

"Ensign Ingersol gave me 2 qts. rum. Elisha Root 1 qt. Erastus Sacket 1 qt." (For barn raising.)

"See in the newspapers, Sir Robert Davens boiled and eat by the Indians."

"Cow hunched me."

"Saw a She Lyon at Landlord Fowler's."

"Pot Ash first made at Westfield."

"Was insulted by a principal man in town for a plain sermon delivered last Sabbath against idleness."

"Long seats taken down in ye Meetinghouse, pews to be put in their place."

"Preached, some offended on account of seats and refuse to come and worship with us."

"Preached—sung twice in forenoon, singers stood up in ye gallery. New Tunes—some disgusted went out last singing."

"Military company set up."

"Provincial Congress at Concord."

Mr. Ballantine died February 12, 1776, so he saw only the start of the colonies' struggle for freedom. Representatives from the town met in Boston, Concord and in nearer places to discuss their responsibility to the mother country and pass resolutions. February 6, 1775, at a Westfield meeting they voted to encourage the minute men and look up the "arms" in town. A later report states that thirty or forty guns were found, but fifty-three men marched in the first company to Boston. Soon more men were called for and then clothing and provisions were requisitioned. When one demand for blankets came, Westfield's quota was thirty-two, while Springfield's was only twelve. The committee in charge of collecting would go to a house and make up its mind how many should be asked from that place. In some cases they were taken from beds in use, but the people gave cheerfully. Colonel Moseley was on the committee of safety, was a delegate to the second and third congresses, helped collect arms in the county and filled various other positions of responsibility. Colonel Elisha Parks assisted in finding armorers and Richard Falley, of Westfield, was added to the number chosen as a "complete master" of the art. Westfield seems to have had little trouble from Tories, but Roland Parks, who failed to respond to a call to march, was lodged in jail. His father, Elisha Parks, was a patriot, but the son is said to have received a life pension from the British Government. John Bancroft, another British sympathizer, was ordered confined to the limits of his own farm. To add to the distress of the times smallpox swept over the town and a "valuable house" was set aside as a hospital and "tenders," all men, were paid four shillings a day for their services.

Colonel Shepard and men from Westfield played an important part in the victory at Saratoga and were in the brigade which had the

responsibility of guarding the prisoners. The Hessian general, Riedesel, with his men came over the road from Albany on his way to Boston and spent a night in Westfield. His wife accompanied him from camp to camp in her little covered carriage and was an object of much curiosity. Many Hessian women also went along with the soldiers, carrying their children and their kettles and other belongings



WESTFIELD NORMAL SCHOOL

with them. Sometimes they were cared for in homes along the way and kindly treated. Two German soldiers are said to have frozen to death in the woods on the day that they reached Westfield, perhaps losing their way, so disorderly and scattered was the march.

A letter written at Valley Forge, January 25, 1778, by William Shepard to David Moseley, of Westfield, has much to say of how poorly clothed his men are and intimates that the State is not doing its duty by the soldiers. He cites Connecticut as caring well for its troops, but the Massachusetts men were "almost naked going into



the snow and frost." Major Warham Parks and others were sent by the town of Boston "to remonstrate to the General Court of the Nakedness of the Army." But the people of Westfield did not show their sympathy in talk only for they sent in April of the same year fifty-three shirts and fifty-three pairs of shoes and stockings to the army.

When the new State Constitution came before the town in 1780 the independent thinkers of Westfield voted not to adopt it "without alteration or amendment"; but in the fall they were casting their ballots for State officers, apparently writing their own choices on slips of paper, for John Hancock received fifty-four votes for Governor, James Bowdoin seventeen and John Worthington two.

Westfield celebrated the proclamation of peace in a "respectable manner," starting with the booming of cannon in the morning and a salute of thirteen shots at noon. There was an address by the Reverend Atwater, an anthem was sung, and thirteen toasts were drank, each accompanied by a cannon shot. The last toast was "May the odious distinctions of Whig and Tory be utterly forgotten under the benign auspices of peace."

One of the notable soldiers of the town was Oliver Root, who though under twenty years old, was enrolled in the famous Corps of Rangers, with John Stark and Israel Putnam among its officers under Major Robert Rogers. The Rangers had to be men of courage and endurance, skilled in woodcraft and able to snowshoe, skate, swim or paddle a canoe, as well as to make long tramps through the woods on their scouting trips. They carried only a single blanket, a tin cup and some corn meal besides their arms and ammunition. At Fort Paris, Major Root showed his resourcefulness when he frightened the savages away with a "four pounder," though its ammunition was limited to a solitary ball and three charges of powder. The first shot carried the cannon ball, on the next a charge of horsechains went singing through the air, while the final one shrieked terror with pieces of a huge old castiron kettle which he had ordered broken up.

Westfield's great Revolutionary hero is General William Shepard. He was one of six brothers who all served in the Revolution and his oldest son served under him. His military career began at the age of seventeen in the Seven Years' War and for more than thirty years he was in the service of his country in high offices. He took a leading

part in two wars and a tablet in his memory cites him as "A Hero of Twenty-two Battles in the American Revolution." He was esteemed by Washington, a friend of Lafayette, and "distinguished for his good character and unbending dignity." General Shepard was a large, well-formed man, six feet in height and weighed over two hundred pounds. He was simple and frugal in his habits and went to his grave a poor man. He was deacon of the Westfield church for twenty-five years, following his father and grandfather, whose combined terms were over three-quarters of a century. His eldest son, William, was deacon of a church in western New York. It was said that no taint of meanness or dishonesty ever attached itself to him.

During the long years of the Revolutionary War and afterward conditions continued to be distressing, the poor people increased and resources were drained to the utmost. The State was in debt, towns were in debt, and so were individuals. The unfulfilled promises of the government tried the patience of the citizens and it was not strange that they sought their own measures of relief. After a convention held in Hadley in 1782, where Captain Daniel Sackett and Lieutenant Falley represented Westfield, Samuel Ely was found guilty of "treasonable practices." Thirty-six towns were represented at another convention held in Hatfield which lasted several days and every grievance, real or imaginary, was aired. Mobs prevented the courts from sitting and prisoners were released from jails. Fourteen articles accepted at another convention resolve against the excise tax, the salary of the Governor, lawyers' fees and other matters. Shays' Rebellion was the outcome and the attempt to capture the Springfield Arsenal was the culminating event. At first General Shepard felt that two or three hundred men would be sufficient for defense and he found it difficult to arm and provision eleven hundred. Forces nearly double his own were closing in on him and he had only five days' slim rations. But the plans of the insurgents miscarried. Shays was easily routed, there was little bloodshed, and General Shepard was once more a victor.

The fourth pastor of Westfield was Noah Atwater, a graduate and tutor of Yale. He was a gardener, a scientific beekeeper and a recorder of the weather and of nature. His people were fond of him and were continually sending him gifts which he often mentioned in his diary. In what proved to be his last sermon he wrote: "I am

advanced in life, in a few weeks I shall be fifty years old. When one has arrived at such an age he must view himself as on the declivity of life, and hastening to the valley of death."

Agitation for an academy in Westfield began as early as 1793, but it was a long while in preparation before its opening on January 1, 1800. Dr. Lathrop preached the opening sermon from the text "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace." The building was quite pretentious, the upper floor an assembly hall and the first floor devoted to class rooms. The pupils boarded in the homes of Westfield if they came from out of town. The academy filled a great need for many years, but after the town high school was established it was decided that two institutions of that sort were not needed and in 1889 the available income of the academy fund was turned over to the town.

The move for a new meetinghouse which began in 1801 culminated in the dedication of the third church building on January 1, 1806. It was one of ten church buildings designed by Charles Bulfinch, of Boston, and took the place of the one built "barn fation with a bell coney upon the middle of it." The burning of the old structure pushed the accomplishment along somewhat, but it was accompanied by the usual diversity of votes. The pews were not "dignified" this time, but were sold outright to help pay for the church. "Doct. Dwight's Collection of Psalms and Hymns" was probably used to sing from at this time. A fine of twenty-five cents was voted to be paid by any person who should ring the meetinghouse bell at any unusual time. In December, 1827, the town voted that the selectmen should procure at the expense of the Congregational Society two stoves for the meetinghouse.

The Baptist Society of Westfield was organized as early as 1784. One of their churches stood on Little River near the center of the town and the other was at the "Farms." About ten years later the first Methodist circuit rider began holding meetings in Hoop Pole, a hamlet in the western part of the town. Reverend Billy Hubbard, who refused to be called "William," organized the first class. An exhorter, Amasa Stocking, drew such crowds that the Congregational pastor of the center was sent "to steady the Ark in Hoop Pole." He reported that there was no danger threatening Hoop Pole because God was there, and in 1829 they dedicated their church. By slow



degrees and hard labor another Methodist church was built in Westfield, which was replaced by a fine edifice in 1876.

The town park on the village green was voted enclosed with a fence about 1835.

A newspaper, the "Hampden Register," was published in Westfield in 1828. Since then other news sheets have been put out under the names of "The Scholar's Journal," "The Talisman," "The Westfield Spectator," the Westfield "Standard," the Westfield "News Letter," the "Woronoco Palladium" and others.

The canal from New Haven to the Connecticut River above Northampton, a distance of about eighty miles from tidewater, passed through Westfield. It was built with sloping banks so that the water would be twenty feet wide at the bottom and thirty-four or thirty-six feet wide at the surface. The banks were ten feet higher than the bottom of the canal and the towing paths were ten feet wide. Feeders, culverts and locks were put in at proper places and the whole project received the approval of the Governor at a public dinner on May 30, 1827, amid the ringing of bells.

On December 9, 1829, the "First Cruise from the Port of Westfield" took place when the canal boat "General Sheldon" made her first voyage from Westfield to New Haven. The cargo brought back consisted of coal, salt, molasses, oranges, codfish and flour. The canal was opened to Northampton in 1835. A delegation from New Haven made the trip and were feasted, paraded and saluted at each town. At Southampton the boat was delayed because "some mean, low-spirited puppy, having nothing of manhood about him except intelligence enough to guide his malice, had let off the water from a half mile level." For a few years this waterway, which had cost immense sums, seemed to prosper, but it was always difficult to maintain and was never a financial success. The coming of the Western Railroad in 1841 was a death blow, followed by the opening of the Canal Railroad a few years later.

In 1797 the State inaugurated a policy of establishing academies and within fifty years such institutions were started in eighty-eight towns. These academies did much toward supplying better teachers, but to James Carter, of Lancaster, belongs the honor of pointing out how to improve educational methods by training teachers. The Westfield Normal School was started September 4, 1844, its first home

being the old Westfield Academy and later the town hall was used. There were two teachers and less than fifty students. "A most elegant building" of brick was erected in 1846 and from that time until the present the school, now a teachers' college, has continued to grow.

A legend exists that in the Mundale section of the town stood a house called Pirates' Den and the lane leading to it was Pirates' Lane. Years ago a gang of counterfeiterers worked there, who used half glass and half lead in their coins to make them ring true. They fled to a cave on Mt. Tekoa, where the forge and smelter still remain, in spite of attempts of the government to locate and destroy them.

Westfield had its fatal traffic accidents over a hundred years ago. According to the inscription on the gravestone in the cemetery, Zenas Atkins, at the age of thirty-four, was suddenly killed while riding in a sleigh and coming in contact with another turning a corner on the evening of January 14, 1816.

In 1808 there lived in Westfield a man named Joseph Jokes, who happened to become the owner of a choice lot of hickory. His many friends frequently called on him for a piece of this wood for whip-stocks, whips being then made at home. Finally Jokes made some of these stocks and offered them for sale. A little later he conceived the idea of putting a lash on the stock. The lash consisted of a heavy piece of horsehide, which was made fast to the stock by a "keeper." These were the first whips made in Westfield.

Jokes did quite a business and other men began improving on the stock by boiling the wood in a preparation of oil and coloring. The recipes for making these preparations were secrets among those who made whips, so each one had a preparation of his own.

Five years later lashes were made of narrow strips of raw horse or cow hide and plaited into cords, very much the same as at present. A piece of leather, rolled round and beveled to make the swell, was inclosed in the center. The lash was rolled between blocks and then varnished. In 1820 the experiment of plaiting a covering of cotton thread over the stocks was tried, but was only partially successful, as it was done entirely by hand, holding the stock on the knees.

At this time different materials began to be used for stocks, such as rattan and whalebone, which proved to be the best for the purpose. When whalebone was first brought into use the entire stock was made of it, a thing rarely afforded later on. Whalebone was then used in

manufacturing the drop on account of its tenacity. After some degree of completeness had been acquired in plaiting over the stock, an attempt was made to bring into use the drop whip, which was only a combination of stock and lash and covered the entire length, thus dispensing with the "keeper." This was a decided improvement and many whips, in a small way and by slow process, were made and offered for sale.

About 1822 an invention was brought into use for whip plaiting by Hiram Hull, father of an ex-president of the American Whip Company at Westfield. Mr. Hull was the first man to start what might be called a whip factory. The invention resembled a barrel in appearance and was called a barrel. The whip to be covered was suspended by the top and hung down in the center of the barrel. A number of threads were attached to the top of the whip and hung over the edge of the barrel, with weights to keep them in position. These weights were worked by the hand, throwing them in opposite directions, thus plaiting the whip almost as perfectly as at the present time, though the process was a very slow one.

This invention was in use through a number of years and an expert at working it was looked upon as a good tradesman. Women are said to have attained quite a speed in working the threads with their nimble fingers. The plaiting of today is done on the same principle as the one first invented.

The drop whip passed through quite a number of years without change, then the drop began to decrease, and finally a whip was made perfectly straight. This was called the bow or trotter's whip.

In 1855 a self-plaiting machine turned by a crank came into use by American design and ingenuity. This improvement tended to increase the whip industry about a third in five years and during the next semi-decade was largely improved upon. In 1865 Westfield produced about one-half million dollars' worth of whips. A year later Westfield led the world in the extent of her whip industry. By 1890 one company alone was putting out over 2,500,000 whips a year.

As the rattan for a whip is assembled an iron spike is inserted in the hickory butt to give the proper "feel" or balance to the whip. The whole bundle is dipped in glue and after drying it is rounded and smoothed. After the plaited covering is on and "buttons" of linen thread placed for ornaments on the stock to mark the handle, the whip



is varnished and waterproofed. Sometimes the name of the dealer is woven in the covering in fancy colors, or the whip may be silver mounted or have a ferrule of gold, or be set with precious stones. Even if it was a perfectly plain twenty-five cent whip in the "gay 'nineties" it could be dressed up with a bow of ribbon to go with the best top buggy. Farmers used to buy a dozen whips at a time, always one a little better than the others for Sundays. When a whip got broken and was past being properly repaired with a new "snapper," it would descend to the use of the boys and the hired man in the express wagon. Whips were easily stolen out of a vehicle, so it was a common sight, especially at the county fair, to see the men carrying their fine whips about with them. It was a trick to "snap" a whip, especially one with a long lash such as was used for four horses, and many a boy practicing in the dooryard on a summer evening only succeeded in wrapping the stinging lash about his own neck. Some were made which measured forty feet to the end of the lash. Three whip companies have survived the increasing popularity of the auto—the United States Whip Company, which now also makes golf clubs and fish lines; the Tyler Whip Company, which makes only whip snaps; and the Cargill, Cleveland & Company, which makes riding crops, dog collars and leashes.

Another Westfield industry was carried on by William H. Butler. He manufactured soapstone linings for stoves and furnaces and made other soapstone articles. His advertisement states that he used a quality of stone "susceptible of a higher polish than any hitherto found in the United States."

The advent of the Civil War found Westfield as patriotic as during the Revolution and the party for the "Union" threw pepper on the stove during a "peace" meeting held in a schoolhouse. Flags floated from many of the houses and a company of volunteers was formed and equipped. Enlistments and drafts followed. A Soldiers' Aid Society was organized and when the war was over a soldiers' monument was erected. Five hundred men and twenty-five officers went out from Westfield.

The bicentennial celebration of the town was held on October 6, 1869, in spite of an unprecedented storm that gullied roads and destroyed property and, worst of all, partially swept away the railroad by which guests and provisions were coming to Westfield. There

was a long parade followed by appropriate services in the church and an address by Hon. Edward B. Gillett.

Westfield once possessed one of the best half-mile race tracks in the country. At that time it also had thirteen hotels filled with guests and apparently making money. Several livery stables did a flourishing business and the retail stores were the shopping center for a large rural area. It was estimated that more than \$30,000 was spent in the city during race week. Woronoco Park, the site of the race track, still remains, though most of the buildings are gone.

The Western Railroad was opened for business as far as Chester in 1841 and was the real beginning of industrial development in Westfield.

The Ensign Box Company was organized in 1840 and produced a very high grade of cigar boxes.

William Johnson began to manufacture church organs in 1844 at 273 Elm Street, where organs are still being built.

H. B. Smith organized a company to build boilers in 1853 and also made iron fences. The company was incorporated in 1878 and is still in business under the old name, selling boilers all over the country. It is located on Main Street, handy to the railroad, and is one of the mainstays of Westfield.

The Crane Brothers were incorporated in 1868 and started to manufacture paper that same year and soon after had two mills in operation.

In 1869, and again in 1878, Westfield was visited by disastrous floods. After the first one, which caused a property damage of over \$100,000, the dikes built after the flood of 1819 were raised higher than before, yet the second one was even more destructive and many homes and business blocks had to be rebuilt when the waters subsided.

Free text books were furnished all the pupils in the town schools in 1884 and the first superintendent of the school system was appointed in 1889. Electricity had been introduced into the homes and factories only a few years before. About this time a district court was established for the first time in Westfield.

The Young Men's Christian Association was organized in Westfield in 1866 and grew slowly until in 1901 they dedicated their own building which stands on Main Street. This was a prosperous period for Westfield. The Woronoco Street Railway was organized and

horse cars made their first appearance on the streets. Eleven miles of track were laid. The Columbian Photo Paper Company was incorporated to manufacture photographic paper and the Foster Machine Company was organized. The latter is still one of the thriving industries of the town.

About this time the tobacco packers were handling \$750,000 worth of tobacco in a year and turning out annually about ten million cigars. The Westfield brickyard felt the business stimulation and raised its output to nine million bricks a year. Westfield had thirty-three whip companies and \$2,000,000 worth of whips were sold. The Planet Company, manufacturers of canvas goods, bags and awnings was prosperous, as were the Warren Thread Company and the Textile Manufacturing Company.

Horse cars were discarded in 1895 and were replaced by the speedier and cleaner electrified system. In 1897 the Noble Hospital was dedicated. Previous to this the sick had been obliged to go to Springfield for hospital care, and the new hospital filled a need not only for Westfield, but for nearby towns. Another fine institution is the Sarah Gillett Home for the Aged, located at 41 Broad Street.

The American Cycle Company was organized to manufacture bicycles and the name was changed to the Lozier Manufacturing Company in 1900. That year they produced over 30,000 wheels.

In 1906 the manufacturing of the first bicycle made in America, the Columbia, was transferred to Westfield. A Columbia racing bicycle made in Westfield was ridden a mile in  $58\frac{3}{8}$  seconds in 1909 by E. J. Collins, paced by an automobile. During the World War the Columbia military bicycle was chosen as standard for the United States Army and many thousands were sent to France. The Westfield Manufacturing Company, builders of Columbia bicycles, are the world's largest manufacturers of bicycles and children's cycles. Their sales now exceed any other time in their history.

In 1902 the Keep Memorial Building was added to the Noble Hospital. It was for the care of patients with contagious diseases and was presented to the town fully equipped, even to linen in the closets, by Mrs. Louisa E. Keep.

Westfield was honored in 1902 when President Theodore Roosevelt attended the State Normal School commencement exercises and



gave a brief address. A year later the electric cars which had been running to Springfield for several years began to run to Hampton Ponds, now called Pequot Lakes; and this beautiful picnic place and bathing beach immediately became quite popular. In 1905 the car line was completed to Huntington.

The same year witnessed the official opening of Camp Bartlett on Hampden Plains, where the yearly mobilization of the State militia took place. Six thousand soldiers were in camp for a two weeks' period.

On September 11, 1911, the Tekoa Country Club was opened as an eighteen-hole golf course.

Nineteen hundred and eleven brought Westfield before the eyes of the entire Nation, for in this year Professor Allyn, instructor in chemistry at the State Normal School, began his crusade against the sale of adulterated foods and caused legislation to be passed prohibiting the use of coal tar preparations or dyes in human food. He also halted the use of narcotics in foods and through his activities Westfield came to be known as "The Pure Food City."

During the World War, Westfield hummed with military life. On August 17, 1917, Camp Bartlett was the scene of feverish activity as the troops were mobilized for service. There were thirteen thousand men in camp and over one hundred thousand visitors came to Westfield, the largest number of people ever to assemble in that city at one time. Twenty-six of the over eight hundred Westfield men in the World War were killed in action, most of them at Chateau Thierry, in June, 1918.

A treasure of Westfield which can now be seen in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City is the handsome door of the old Fowler tavern which was built in 1760. The door is about eight feet high, six feet wide and four inches thick.

Westfield has one of the best airport sites in this section of the country, consisting of about fifty acres of land on Hampden Plains, donated by the late Vincent E. Barnes in 1923. The city did not feel able to support a municipal flying field, so it is at present used by a private concern.

A fine armory was built in 1935 and is the headquarters of Company H, 104th United States Infantry, commanded by Captain Shaw. The only other Federal building is the post-office, recently constructed

of granite and limestone. A State building is the Westfield Sanatorium for tubercular patients. This is situated on a hill east of the city's center and is built of brick and concrete. Dr. Henry Chadwick was instrumental in placing this institution among the foremost of its kind.

The Westfield Rod and Gun Club has a range on the plains near Barnes' Airport where many trapshoots are held each year. This club was interested in having the Westfield River stocked each year with brown trout and bass.

The Westfield Athenæum was incorporated in 1864 and the establishment of it was mainly due to the public spirit of Samuel Mather and Hiram Harrison. The trustees of the Westfield Academy, largely influenced by Edward B. Gillett, made possible the removal to the present site, which was the former home of Hon. James Fowler, father of Mrs. Gillett and grandfather of Senator Frederick H. Gillett. When the new Athenæum was built that house was incorporated in the plant and, as the Fowler-Gillett house, is devoted to the juvenile department. The Hon. M. B. Whitney, with a gift of \$80,000, which by fortunate investment was increased to \$145,000, was the major founder of the present building.

Mrs. Florence Rand Lang, a native of Westfield, gave the money for the Jasper Rand Art Museum in honor of her father and grandfather. The Edwin Smith Historical Museum was given by William T. Smith in honor of his father. Many other gifts of money, furnishings, pictures and museum articles have been made by numerous friends of the town.

The Westfield Athenæum is one of the most beautiful buildings in the city. It is built of brick and has two imposing limestone columns on the front and limestone trim at the windows.

Just outside the entrance to the museum is placed a bronze bas-relief of Edwin Smith, while within is a room of colonial design, with old Deerfield wall paper, candle lights, a fireplace and beading taken from an old house in Southwick. There are cabinets filled with china, glass and pottery and large floor cases filled with other articles. At the far end is an old kitchen with fireplace and oven and kitchen utensils.

In the art room a series of loan exhibitions have been held and a few permanent pictures form the nucleus for a fine collection.

The "Grandmother's Garden," laid out by the park commission on the Chauncey Allen Park, was given by Albert Steiger, a leading merchant of Springfield and a native of Westfield, as a memorial to his mother. He was also donor of the park. Individuals have been invited to make gifts of old-fashioned flowers and shrubs, so it is a friendly garden as well as an old-fashioned one.

Juniper Park is a fairly recent addition to the city's park system. A gravel driveway circles through the area and a bridle trail has been



WESTFIELD ATHENÆUM

laid out. Picnic benches and fireplaces have been constructed to make the park of service to visitors.

Westfield marble has been used in at least twenty different banking houses in the West, where the green variety is very popular with architects. The leading varieties being worked are black and green, spangled and verd antique, all of which take a fine polish. The works of the Westfield Marble and Sandstone Company are located in the



Mundale district and the power for the mill is supplied by the Little River. These deposits have been worked to some extent since the earliest settlement of the country and there are traces of the operations of the Indians, who took out conical blocks of the softer varieties.

Among the old established firms of Springfield was that of the J. W. Adams Nursery. Mr. Adams came to Springfield from Portland, Maine, in 1867, in order to take advantage of a less rigorous climate. His first location was on a plot of seven acres between North Main and Chestnut streets, where he remained with the use of additional land until 1912. Several greenhouses were erected and also a cement storage house to take care of foreign shipments. His original purpose of producing fruit trees gradually broadened to include ornamental trees and shrubs until now the fruit department is only a small part of the business.

In 1912 the firm of J. W. Adams and Company, which included his sons, Walter and Charles, moved to a farm of forty acres in Westfield and now more than a hundred acres are devoted to the growing of all kinds of plants. A nursery business is one of the most important industries of the county, for on it future forests depend and it takes years to grow a supply of stock.

The John S. Lane and Son quarries were opened in 1893 and since then tons of the volcanic lava, known as trap-rock, have been taken out. It is crushed at the quarry, graded into six different sizes from two and one-half inches to what is sold as dust, and sent out by truck and by freight car all through this part of the country. Much of it has been used for railroad ballast and the rest for road construction and in concrete work.

The Westfield State Sanatorium was opened for tubercular patients in March, 1910, on a high plateau above the Westfield River valley. It is placed on a tract of one hundred and seventy-eight acres and consists of three wards and several service buildings as well as barns and farmhouses. The children are housed in a separate ward and have regular school sessions, craft work and clubs such as other children have. They give plays and have celebrations and are entertained with motion pictures. Occupational work for the adults helps along the curative powers of good food, rest, and sunshine.

Westfield's two hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebration was a noteworthy occasion. It started on September 1, 1919, and except for a day of rain the elaborate exercises were carried out as planned. The historical exhibit gathered from the old families of the town far exceeded expectations. A pageant of events in Westfield's history, written by Mrs. Patty Lee Waterman Clark, was the main feature and had over five hundred performers in the cast. The military parade on September 3 included the 3d Cavalry Machine Gun Troop, Red Cross workers, Grand Army of the Republic veterans, the Worcester Continentals, Springfield Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Westfield Fire Department and over four hundred service men. The parade was reviewed by Governor Coolidge, former Governor Samuel W. McCall and Major-General Clarence R. Edwards, all of whom later made addresses after the unveiling of the General Shepard monument. Though the program of sports had to be omitted, the celebration was one worthy of Westfield's past history.

Two crossed wires were blamed for the fatal blaze in Westfield on the night of January 5, 1936, when six persons perished in the flames which consumed the Van Deusen Inn and a seventh person died from burns. All of the victims were well known in the city and one was Grace Fickett, a member of the Westfield State Teachers' College faculty. Another was a young man of seventeen, a student at the Westfield High School.

The Van Deusen Inn was a flimsy building with partitions of wall-board and no fire stops of any sort. The exterior was of cement-brick veneer and the fire escapes were inadequate. There were, however, fire extinguishers on all floors and an inside alarm system. About thirty-five people lived at the hotel, but many were away for the week end. So rapidly did the fire consume the building that eye-witnesses were few, except to the later stages, when nearly 15,000 people gathered at the scene.

Among the rescues effected was that of Marion Stearns, an elderly resident of the inn, by Amoret Van Deusen, fourteen-year-old daughter of the proprietors. Some of the trapped tenants escaped over a roof and were taken from there by firemen. This was the most serious disaster ever to take place in Westfield.

REMINISCENCES OF ADDISON L. GREEN—During a big flood the Westfield River burst its dikes and the lower part of the town became

a muddy Venice. Following the flood the work of reconstructing the dike began and the high school boys turned out to help, inspired alike by patriotism and a desire for the splendid compensation of two dollars a day. Their zeal was attested not only by lamed backs and blistered hands, but also by the fact that the professional laborers, unwilling to follow their pace, threatened to quit unless the boys were discharged, and so the boys went back to school. At this period the canal paralleled the tracks of the "Putty Railroad" and in winter furnished the first skating.

John H. Haldeman was principal of the Green District School and Abner Gibbs of the high school. Mr. Haldeman had an unusual ability for imparting knowledge, a distinct sense of humor, a quiet dignified manner, a real interest in his pupils' welfare and a character that left its impress upon all who were under him. He had the faculty of personal intimacy with each of his pupils and his interest in them did not cease when they left school.

When Mr. Gibbs was principal of the high school the old academy building formed a part of the high school building. Its bell tower, its distinctive New England architecture and its walls scratched and cut with the names of men long since passed to their fathers are well remembered. Mr. Gibbs possessed much sympathy, practical sense, a capacity for seeing the other fellow's position, and the kind of enthusiasm that is infectious and sure to touch a responsive chord. His work and influence were not bounded by the walls of the school, but extended throughout the town. This was partly the result of lectures that he used to give upon scientific and popular subjects, in which he frequently applied his learning to everyday problems. He had a sense of humor, though it was rather dry and repressed. One day, coming up from Latin class, I picked up a tiny mouse, which upon reaching my seat, I dropped upon the floor without any particular thought of consequences. In a moment the school was in an uproar. Girls were standing upon the seats and boys were making vociferous efforts to capture the mouse. For some time Mr. Gibbs was sure the mouse had been released by another pupil and directed him to stand up and began to tell him most vigorously what he thought of the proceeding. Of course, there was nothing for me to do but rise and explain that I was the guilty party. Mr. Gibbs became silent, the school was expectant, but after a moment of consideration he said he



would see me after school. When we met he said after a while: "You did the right thing to own up so promptly, but don't you think it was rather a silly performance?" I admitted it was and the incident was closed.

The high school had a lyceum which met once a week and its exercises consisted of debates, recitations and essays. A critic was appointed and at the close of the meeting made such criticisms as he or she was capable of making upon the program. Secret societies were a part of school life, but their mysteries lay wholly in the significance of their names, the password and the grip. It used to be a favorite stunt for the presiding genius of the society to call a man on the floor and then hand him a subject upon which it was his duty to speak for three or five or ten minutes. The facility acquired by some of the boys in this impromptu work was surprising.

Mr. Phineas Buell managed the Athenæum and a democratic institution it was. One might go by himself anywhere and pull down from the shelves the books he fancied, look at them as long as he liked and read what he pleased. Mr. Buell was much interested in phrenology and I remember once introducing him to my grandfather. He immediately viewed our heads, remarked upon the similarity of the conformation, and stated that any one familiar with phrenology could tell our relationship. We went away without explaining that it was a step-grandfather.

There are some men who fire the imagination of the young and one of them was E. B. Gillett. I was quite young when I heard him speak in public, but I have yet a clear recollection of a striking countenance, aquiline features, powerful but pleasing voice and impressive manners. Probably it was contrast that fixed this recollection so firmly in my mind, because the town was later visited by Benjamin F. Butler, who was then a candidate for the Governorship of Massachusetts. Perhaps I expected too much of an ex-general and a gubernatorial candidate, but how far short of Mr. Gillett did he seem to me in dignity, appearance, language and thought.

I remember how amused was Sarah Kneil, a teacher in the high school, when one St. Patrick's Day the principal was absent. The traditions of the school demanded that there be a lively demonstration on that day. The school assembled verdant in green sashes, neckties and blouses, and if their footsteps had not been heard coming

upstairs during devotions, two boys would have appeared in green coats and trousers. They were waylaid on the stairs and never permitted to reveal their glory to an expectant school. After devotions it was insisted that all articles of green be removed and their resumption that day was forbidden under threat of direst penalties. When school opened in the afternoon it was found that while the orders had been literally obeyed, everyone was then resplendent in orange.

"Squire" Fuller, a lovable character, always wore a silk hat and dark coat, carried a cane, and invariably entered his office in the morning smoking a cigar. He was practically certain to lay down his hat, his cane and his cigar upon the desk, and then his cane usually fell upon the floor and the cigar when resumed had about an even chance of having its lighted end placed in Mr. Fuller's mouth, evoking his favorite exclamation: "By Godfrey! By Godfrey!"

We used to get up at daybreak and drive out to Southwick Ponds for pond lilies and return home in time for school. The girls provided sandwiches and cocoa for our early sunrise breakfast. There were dances, too, and sleigh rides and bus rides to Blandford, to Russell and Salmon Falls, and dancing there to the tune of Ben Chadwick's concertina and under the inspiration of his prompting; dancing, likewise, in the big hall out at Frank Atwater's, where we all understood George Washington was once entertained. Then there were excursions or picnics along the various beauty spots that line the little river as it comes tumbling down the rocks from the "dry bridge." There was a great deal of social life among the young people of the town, but it was dependent upon their capacity to amuse themselves and led them to develop their own resources.

WESTFIELD IN THE LATE 'SEVENTIES, BY BERTHA M. FREEMAN  
—To one who spent only the years of childhood in Westfield the backward glance makes the town seem like a wondrous playground. There was enough of country, so that one was never cramped for room or stifled for lack of air. There was enough of city, so that the circus and the merry-go-round did not pass us by.

In the spring we went up the Blandford Road in Mr. Hull's ice cart and off into the woods for the sweetest May flower, the trailing arbutus. Later, we would fill our baskets with wild strawberries and the "youngsters" of the wintergreen. Behind the trees and knolls and an occasional barn we played hide-and-go-seek counting: "Eeny,

meeny, miny mo, pesky-lony, bony stro, hull-gull boo! Out goes you!" or perhaps we varied it with: "Catch a nigger by the toe, if he hollers let him go."

When the first of May came we went forth hanging gaily colored tissue paper May baskets, darting out and home again for fear of losing the fun of chasing the basket-hanger at our own door. On the thirtieth we decorated the Soldiers' Monument and walked behind the noble veterans of the Civil War.

At graduation time we went in groups to the pastures and hillsides for the mountain laurel. The tragedy of the big flood is lost in the wonderful experience that the days brought. First the schoolhouse basement was full of water and the school yard a sea of boards, boxes and sheds, so that avenue of fancied torture was closed. Then we could revel in fishing with the garden rake for the vegetables needed for dinner from the top cellar stair, or better yet go boating up our own street, catching treasures as they floated past. The devastation sat lightly upon us to whom floods furnished holidays. The settled spring brought marbles and kite-flying from many a hilltop. There were no telephone wires to catch our strings and spoil our tempers. There was croquet, too, and sometimes archery. Who can forget the firemen's muster, when the old-time tub vied with the modern engine in throwing a stream of water? We recall the awesome "Yellow Day," September 6, 1881. The schools were closed, President Garfield lay dying and prophets said this was the end of the world, but still we lived on.

There were crisp, clear Saturdays when we filled the hayrack with shouting boys and girls with bulging baskets and started for the chestnut trees on the Berkshire Hills. In the glow of the setting sun we piled back into the hayrack loaded with nuts, tired and bur-scratched, but radiantly happy. As we creaked and rattled down the hills toward home snatches of song with "Co-ca-chee-lunk, chee-lunk, chee lay-lee" and "Rig-a-jig-jig" announced our coming.

The joy of Westfield in winter could not be equaled. King Street had unexcelled coasting, with double-runners flying by in close succession. When we feared the street was getting too much cut up, we used to turn the hose on at night and find beautiful glare ice in the morning.





WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

Friday nights, when there were no lessons to learn, we gathered in somebody's big kitchen, made pop-corn balls, pulled molasses candy and walked home in the moonlight.

The vivid nights of the torchlight processions stand out clearly in our recollections. We decorated our windows in red, white and blue paper and put candles behind them if the marching was in behalf of our particular political party, but, if not, our windows were ominously dark.

Valentine's Day was a day of uncertain rapture with laced and fringed paper messages.

The autograph album was the giver and receiver of youthful emotions:

"Over here—way out of sight  
I'll sign my name just out of spite."

THE HIGH SCHOOL IN 1862, BY S. J. FOWLER—The high school used to be kept in the first story of the town hall, which was pleasant for the students, because whenever there was a town meeting there was such a noise in the second story that school had to be dismissed.

On the first day of the term the teacher would ask the boys what they were going to study and one after another would answer: "Arithmetic, grammar and geography." Finally, the teacher got tired of hearing that and said: "Now, I've had enough of this arithmetic, grammar and geography. You boys have come here year after year and studied those three subjects, and if you haven't learned those things it is because you haven't brains enough to take them in. You have got to take something else. Take astronomy or algebra. At any rate arithmetic, grammar and geography cannot now be taken." And they weren't.

Lessons were not always learned in that school. Once all the boys in the class failed and the teacher lined them up with their faces toward the blackboard. Then he made circles on the board about three inches higher than the boys' noses and said to each: "Put your nose in the ring." This they all proceeded to do, standing on their tip-toes to accomplish it. That position becomes very tiresome and painful after awhile, so the boys reached one way and another until they got erasers and rubbed out the circles, putting in others about two inches lower, so that they could stand on their heels. When the teacher observed the heels on the floor he sauntered around and

immediately raised the boys by an application of the heavy ruler he carried in his hand.

A boy misconducted himself once, but he had been thrashed so often in the usual way that the teacher knew it would do no good. So the boy was sent out of school to get a sapling to be flogged with. He returned after a half day's absence with a young pine tree about twenty feet long and two inches in diameter at the butt, with the bark nicely stripped off and handed it to the teacher, who quietly told him to take his seat.

CHANGES IN WESTFIELD, BY FRANCES FOWLER—The boys liked to walk barefoot on the fences and there were fences for every house-lot unless a hedge of arbor-vitæ took its place. Some fences were scenes of walking competitions. The one on Broad Street in front of the Alden house was easy, but in front of the Morgan house the rails were set edges up and walking was quite a toeing-in stunt. Lawn-mowers were not much used during the days of fences and the streets were seldom sprinkled. When fences began to go out of style in the early 'eighties a young man airily offered his company to a young woman, saying: "May I escort you to your gate?" "Thank you," she said, "the gate is in the woodshed."

One of the joys of travel was to have the stage call for passengers. Someone asked once what sort of a woman a certain child had made, "for," said she, "the last time I saw her she was hanging on behind the old stagecoach." Then came "hacks" and we drove all around town to pick up other travelers, and happy was the youngster who was called for first. Later there was a small omnibus, but usually people walked. Before the big flood there was a covered bridge over the river and at the further end of it stood a huge elm tree. This was one of the finest known specimens of New England's famous elms and of more than local fame through Henry Ward Beecher's praise of its surpassing beauty.

Vehicular fashion has changed as much as anything and merely to think of the different kinds of wagons, carriages, carts, sleds and sleighs which sped over the roads of Hampden County is to set one's mental wheels in a whirl. Sleigh rides are even yet unsurpassed in many minds.

Great changes are seen in the ways of the kitchen. Even when bought poultry was usually plucked and dressed and vegetables cleaned



at home, berries were sold at the door from pails to dishes, milk was poured out by measure into wide pans or pitchers and the genial milkman would give a child a drink from the cover of his ten-quart tin can. Milk tickets passed from hand to pocket and from pocket to pan over and over again. Nearly everyone made sausages and headcheese at home and tried out the lard. How good the hot crisp "scraps" smelled on a cold night! A whole orange was rather self-indulgent and a bunch of bananas a wonder to behold.

In connection with water in the kitchen one remembers the changes from the wellsweep, the pump in the yard, the pump in the kitchen, the cold water faucet at the kitchen sink, and the luxury of the hot water tank back of the range to the water service enjoyed today. From water to fire is but a step and reminds us how recent and how devoid of widespread excitement is the present fire alarm system. For many years the bell of the First Church clanged out the fire warning and if it rang at night everybody jumped out of bed and pattered from window to window and even up the garret stairs to see where the sky was red. All the young men rushed to the blaze and were rather drowsily envied by those who went back to sleep.

Near the academy from whose old belfry the bell cast by Paul Revere rang out a call as important as the call he gave to the sleeping patriots was the old canal. Here many a school boy shyly put on some girl's skates and advanced thence to paying other and fonder attentions. Here budding chivalry slipped and slid into favor, and skill in curves and edges were shown off to admiring eyes.

Bates' Pond on Pleasant Street was a safe fishing place for both child and fish, the safest of skating places for small children, and quite large enough for practice before one advanced to the more public canal. Southwick Ponds was a charming, peaceful haunt for afternoon and evening, with lilies resting on its breast and Manatick keeping guard. The old flat-bottomed boats gave early rowing lessons, which were followed by the homeward drive behind the fast little mares over the dusty plains.

Church services have changed much in fifty years. A few mothers allowed their children to read Sunday school books during sermon time and the minister, Dr. Davis, said he was glad to see pews full of quiet children, whose mothers could give him their attention. Sunday observance was much more strict than now and everybody went to

church as a matter of course, sometimes to three services. One Sunday word came to a farmer that his cattle had gotten out of the pasture on Montgomery Mountain and he went up to see about it, taking some of the children with him. On his return, while worshippers were passing the house on their way to afternoon service, the youngest child brought blushes to the parents' faces by holding up a pail of berries and calling out: "Oh, mamma, we got two quarts!"

When Dr. Davis died the Sunday school marched to the cemetery. Some who were too young rode with their parents in carriages, but it was a matter of pride to be old enough to trudge along the dusty road.

Baptisms sometimes took place in the river just below the bridge. There have been as many changes in religious customs as in the bed of the river.

One April day two little Westfield girls had completed several successful slides down the icehouse roof and were sitting in the sawdust by the door giggling and planning the next prank, when their grandfather came up the lane. He stopped before them and solemnly and sadly said: "Little girls, how can you laugh today? A great and good man has gone." He referred to the death of Abraham Lincoln and made a profound impression which was, no doubt, what he intended.

For social life there were supper parties and cousin parties and a few dances. One vacation when the college boys came home there were twelve parties in a fortnight.

A parsimonious school committeeman once bought "slabs" to burn in the schoolhouse stoves and the children were almost frozen. The district schools were probably always poorly heated and ventilated, but who cared then? The school committee were of a rather casual sort, but when they visited the school they were looked at with such awe as mere man has seldom caused.

The question was asked of a lady from Buffalo a few years ago if a clergyman, candidate for a pulpit, would find congenial, intellectual companionship in Westfield. "Intellect?" she exclaimed, "Poetesses in Westfield are as common as milkmen in Buffalo."

WESTFIELD TOWN MEETINGS, BY J. H. LOCKWOOD—Much has been written in praise of the New England town meeting and its value can hardly be overestimated. Interest is intense as regards the business affairs and personal characteristics involved. Many items of vast

importance are considered by men memorable for personality and ability, real statesmen in vision, efficiency and debate. Citizens listen with admiration and envy to the gifted village orators, amazed at their natural powers of forceful expression. At times contestants on both sides of a question are so effective and convincing in pressing their respective cases that a listener finds himself wobbling, each speaker in turn bringing him to a decision on an opposite side.

In Westfield, as elsewhere, as each annual meeting drew near, the hearts of the school board began to flutter with anxiety lest the steadily enlarging appropriations called for by changing conditions might in some way arouse opposition and fail of approval. The trepidation was keen, but a blessed relief was felt when the budget was finally ratified. Sometimes discussion was carried to wearisome lengths by long-winded advocates.

A remarkably capable series of moderators guided the proceedings and when one of the right type was found he was kept in the chair for succeeding years, if he was willing to wear the distressful crown. When affairs became so complicated as to bewilder any ordinary parliamentarian, those skillful moderators would keep their heads, maintain order and give rulings which were rarely upset by "Cushing's Manual."

One worthy citizen who took little part in formal debate, almost invariably arose when a motion was made to approve an appropriation, and moved the substitution of a sum lower than the one named. He was habitually opposed to what seemed to him a tendency to extravagance in handling the town's money, but once he reversed his usual procedure. The town was considering an appropriation to be used in providing bathrooms at the town farm and he arose and said: "I move that the amount be raised to \$10,000 and immediately expended, for at the present rate of extravagance we all shall be there soon and it will be well to have sufficient bathrooms ready for us."

Sometimes there was wire-pulling, but not of a serious character; but there were impassioned debates, hot words, sharp retorts and personal reflections, but the bitternesses were speedily mollified. It is a great loss to the citizens when the town meeting becomes obsolete as a local forum.



SENATOR GILLETT—To Frederick Huntington Gillett belonged the distinction of having held a higher office in the national government than any other citizen of Hampden County. His thirty-eight years in Congress were years of honorable and careful service. His six years as Speaker of the House of Representatives were marked by courtesy, tact and a becoming dignity on notable occasions.

Mr. Gillett was born in Westfield, October 16, 1851. His father, Edward B. Gillett, was one of the ablest lawyers and most polished men of his time in western Massachusetts. His mother was Lucy Fowler, daughter of one of Westfield's prominent citizens. The future Speaker was named after the well-known bishop, Frederick D. Huntington, of Syracuse, New York, and Hadley, who had been a classmate of the father's at Amherst College.

Frederick Gillett's early boyhood was that of a normal boy born into a well-to-do New England family. Then, as throughout his later life, he was fond of outdoor sports, and as a youngster showed his proficiency at baseball and other games. He and some of his Westfield cronies had a flat-bottomed boat, which, according to tradition, by virtue of much pulling and hauling, they managed to get down the Westfield River to the Connecticut.

The boy's early education was gained in the Westfield schools. But his father took an unusually deep interest in his progress and developed in the young man the talent for graceful oratory and felicitous expression inherited from himself—an art in which Frederick could scarcely have had a better master. Years afterward, however, at the banquet tendered Mr. Gillett in Springfield in honor of his election as Speaker, he declared that what he was most grateful to his father for was the fact that he had been held to his daily chores at the woodpile. From the discipline of that woodpile he had gained a capacity and a liking for work which had served him through life.

Young Gillett was captain and second baseman of the Westfield Academy nine and after he had completed the rest of the curriculum he went, somewhat unexpectedly, for a year's study in Germany before going to college. In the fall of 1870 he entered Amherst, where he was particularly stimulated by the instruction of Prof. John W. Burgess, professor of political science and history.

Speaker Gillett's course at Amherst was marked by his demonstrations of ability as a writer and speaker, as a baseball player, as a stu-

dent of more than ordinary excellence, and as a young man whose personal attractions drew others to him in friendships that were to be lifelong. His classmate, W. E. Judd, of Holyoke, once said of him in after years: "He was not a 'dig,' but he was the best all-round man in the class and the most popular. He was a fellow who played hard and fair every time; one that everybody honored. In short, he showed the same qualities then that have characterized him since."

After his graduation at Amherst, Mr. Gillett studied law at Harvard Law School and was admitted to the Massachusetts bar in 1877, establishing himself in Springfield. After two years of practice, he went to Boston as Assistant Attorney-General of Massachusetts, where he remained until 1882. Mr. Gillett was later a partner of the late W. W. McClench, who said of him: "Mr. Gillett was always courteous, never harrying or intimidating a witness, and he made a very good impression on juries. He showed a keen grasp of whatever matter he had under consideration, and in his arguments before the Supreme Court particularly showed splendid ability."

In 1891, two years before he went to Washington, Mr. Gillett represented Springfield in the State House of Representatives. His victory at the polls in 1892, when he was put forward as a Massachusetts candidate for Congress, began the unbroken series of elections which kept him in that body for thirty-eight years and made his service notable in Congressional history.

Mr. Gillett did not rashly try to make a speech the day he entered Congress, but when he did make his first speech it was with a success that gave him a lively satisfaction. As he afterward described his experience:

"The Republicans, their backs to me, heard a strange voice and turned to learn who was addressing them. Their doing so was almost simultaneous and that with their inquiring looks, all centered upon my face, was somewhat embarrassing. I noted, however, that the Democrats were reading newspapers and writing letters, and were not disturbed by anything I was saying.

"Therefore, I raised my voice and opened what I hoped would be a vigorous attack on Tammany Hall. Democrats sprang to their feet and assailed me with inquiries and short speeches to which they gave the form of questions. Fortu-

nately, I was enabled approximately to say what ought to have been said by an amateur debater, and when I sat down all the Republicans, led by Nelson Dingley, of Maine, passed down the aisle at the side of my desk and gave me their congratulations."

When Mr. Gillett reached the position of Speaker of the House of Representatives, he issued the following statement: "I have reached the goal of my ambition, a happiness which I suppose comes to few men." As speaker, Mr. Gillett presided with uniform tact and consideration and when Democrats as well as Republicans at the close of each session joined in giving him a vote of thanks it was no perfunctory act but a sincere appreciation of his good will.

Mr. Gillett was drafted as candidate for the Senate in 1925 and, though having again to begin at the bottom as far as committee appointments were concerned, he soon came to hold a sort of special position as senatorial spokesman for the White House and his superior, Calvin Coolidge. After six years as Senator he decided to retire and went to California with his wife, formerly the widow of Congressman Rockwood Hoar, whom he had married in 1915. There he devoted himself to writing a biography of the late Senator George F. Hoar and reminiscences of his own long career.

In an address given at the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebration of the town of Westfield in 1919, Mr. Gillett said:

"It is, I believe, by exercising the dominant spirit of the old New England town that our present threatening conditions can be remedied. Thrift and self-denial, work and saving, is what our country needs, and that is what our hard-headed, determined, sometimes unattractive, nation-builders developed. They could sacrifice the pleasure of the moment for permanent future enjoyment. It is such self-denial that builds character—it is that which we need today."

JOSEPH B. ELY—An outstanding son of Westfield is Joseph B. Ely, who was elected Governor of Massachusetts in 1930 and served two terms. He was the first Democrat from west of Worcester to become Governor in seventy years and defeated the Republican Governor Allen, who had a record of two successful years in office.



Joseph Ely was born of the ninth generation of Elys in western Massachusetts on February 22, 1881, and grew up in the atmosphere of a family which had been Democratic for years. His father was Henry Ely, also a lawyer.

In high school he met Harriet Dyson and a romance grew which culminated in their marriage a few years later. From Westfield High School, Joseph Ely went to Williams College and there his political interests developed. In the campaign of 1900 he organized the Williams College Democratic Club in the interests of the Presidential candidate, William Jennings Bryan, who was to him a hero.

Ely was graduated from Harvard Law School in 1905 and at once began to practice by associating himself with his father in Springfield and Westfield. In 1915 he was appointed district attorney by Governor David I. Walsh and proved an able prosecutor.

Joseph Ely was a champion of Woodrow Wilson and later of Alfred Smith, and was twice a delegate to the party's national conventions. When he was elected Governor his home town gave him a tremendous ovation with a parade and fireworks.

In an interview at the close of his terms as Governor, Mr. Ely stated that he felt the public morale was at a low ebb. He cited the prevalence of racketeering in politics and in business, the growth of gambling and the tendency to place all burdens on the government; and added that he regarded a political life as fascinating, but demoralizing to the individual. He retired from the field to devote himself to his profession and to writing.

Joseph Ely impressed the State with a strong sense of justice and fearlessness in the discharge of his duties. He has always taken a deep interest in the affairs of his home town and served for a number of years on various committees.

The success or failure of a Governor's term of office may be measured by three things: his conduct of the executive department, his ability to direct the course of legislation and his ability to influence public opinion. Governor Ely used the radio and talked directly to the people. He came into office during the depression and early advocated an extended system of public works, but one combined with a pay-as-you-go policy and accompanied by strict economy. He succeeded in putting the Boston elevated under public control for another twenty-eight years and created the Fall River Commission when that

city went into bankruptcy. He labored on the questions of automobile insurance, salary cuts, a fairer tax base and bank stabilization.

One of the big crises in Governor Ely's administration was the national textile strike and in a speech on the subject the Governor stated the principle that the State had as much of a duty to protect the right to work as to permit the right to strike. He refused to call out the National Guard, but assured protection to every factory or mill where it was evident that the majority of the workers wished to return.





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*Agawam, the Mother of Springfield  
Plantation*

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## CHAPTER IV

### *Agawam, the Mother of Springfield Plantation*

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Agawam, the mother of Springfield, is also one of its youngest grandchildren. The first house in the Springfield township was built in the Agawam meadows in 1635, but was soon abandoned and Agawam territory became part of the "outward commons."

In 1638 it was voted that it should be lawful for any Springfield man to put over horse, cows, or young cattle on the other side of the river until the first of November, and the name of "Feeding Hills" doubtless comes from the use thus made of unoccupied lands. But it was twenty-five years after the visit of Woodcock and Cable, the men who built the first house, before permanent settlement was made south of the Agawam River. The first grants were made to Thomas Cooper, Abel Leonard and Thomas Mirrick, and within a few years there were a number of settlers scattered about at various points. A part of the territory was known by the early settlers as "Brookfield" from the fact of there being so many small brooks running through it. Three Mile Brook is commonly known as Trout Brook and empties into the Connecticut River near the southeast corner of the town. Philo and Still brooks course through the town for about three miles and then flow over the State border to the south.

The meetinghouse, that important center of both religious and civil life to which the people felt obliged to go on the Sabbath Day, no matter what the weather, was on the other side of the Connecticut River, a pleasant trip on a sunny morning in summer, but equally unpleasant and even dangerous at some seasons of the year. In 1673 the inhabitants petitioned the town for a boat in which to cross the river to attend public worship, feeling that free ferriage should be furnished them, but this was not granted. One Sabbath morning in March, 1683, three members of the Bodurtha family were "drowned



dead" when the boat upset while they were crossing to the meeting-house. But even this fatal accident did not at once procure a separate parish for the people west of the river, and it was not until 1696 that the parish of West Springfield was created and the Great River no longer had to be crossed on the Sabbath Day.

The history of our present Agawam then became more closely that of West Springfield, though the civil control remained in the hands of Springfield until 1774. Two villages began to develop, one on each of the turnpikes running north and south. One road went from Hartford through Agawam north along the Connecticut River and the other a little farther west, went from Hartford through Feeding Hills to Northampton. The teams and stages travelling these roads stopped at Colonel Moseley's Tavern in Feeding Hills, or Worthington's Inn on the Agawam Road. As business grew and the roads improved eleven or twelve stages a day had to be accommodated and other taverns were started. White's Tavern was near the State line, Leonard's at Agawam Center and one on the river road was kept by Ruel Warriner. Colonel Samuel Flower erected one in Feeding Hills about 1760.

When the southern part of West Springfield contained about seventy-five families it succeeded in being made into a separate parish. This happened in 1758 and it was called the Sixth Parish of Springfield. A brick schoolhouse was built in Feeding Hills about this time and plans made for building a meetinghouse. Captain Samuel Mirick was moderator and Moses Leonard clerk of the first precinct meeting at which seventeen pounds was voted for preaching the gospel.

They decided to locate the meetinghouse in the center of the population rather than in the center of the territory or in either village, and in 1760 it was built "at ye head of the first branch beyond Ensign Reuben Leonard's." Sufficient rum and cider was provided for the raising and, though not completed, the structure was used the first year. Rev. Mr. Williams, of Springfield, preached the dedicatory sermon on December 3, 1760. The church society was organized with only nine members in addition to the pastor, but twenty others united by letter within a month. For eleven successive years the parish clerk was voted fifty cents annually. Rev. Sylvanus Griswold was installed as pastor with a salary of \$225 a year and the use of forty acres of land. An interesting vote about this time was "to choose a

committee to see if the persons that are of different ways of thinking from each other in matter of religion may be reconciled together and may let down and enjoy the ordinances of the gospel together in brotherly love." The church society was a mixed one of Congregationalists and Baptists and for some years they succeeded in getting along without too many differences, each respecting the other's form of belief. Then a separate Baptist group was organized and the meetinghouse used jointly by the two church societies. As early as 1727 some persons in Agawam were baptized into the Baptist faith by Elisha Callender, pastor of the first church in Boston.

One historian states that when another Baptist society was formed in 1790 with eleven members services were held in the home of Jonathan Ferre in stormy weather and under the apple trees in the orchard when it was pleasant. Rev. Jesse Wightman was chosen pastor and remained until his death in 1817. So devoted was Mr. Wightman that he preached sitting long after he was unable to stand at the desk. A serious disagreement over singing in the church occurred in 1814 and the observance of communion was suspended several months, but the efforts of the pastor restored harmony and a revival took place the next year.

When a Methodist group was formed in 1802 they also used the same building, which was not completely finished until 1821. The Rev. Sylvanus Griswold remained as pastor in this pastorate over fifty-seven years.

The manufacturing interests of Agawam began, as in so many other settlements, with a sawmill, a necessity for the growth of any community. As early as 1665 a grant was made to Samuel Marshfield, Thomas Noble, Thomas Miller and Elizur Holyoke of forty acres of land in one place and thirty in another in consideration of their setting up a sawmill "on a brook below Ensign Cooper's farm, over Agawam River." A very generous addition was "they are not to be restrained of the liberty of the commons for all sorts of timber for their use for sawing or otherwise." Other sawmills, gristmills, blacksmith shops and brickyards followed as they were needed.

Over a century ago a peppermint distillery was set up in the southern part of the town by E. Porter. Later potato whiskey was made and finally cider brandy and rye gin. The name of "Agawam Gin" came to be known throughout the region.

Agawam is said to have had the first cotton mill of any sort in western Massachusetts. It was built in 1810 on land now owned by Riverside Park at the mouth of Three Mile Brook. Thomas Belden, of Hartford, joined with four Agawam men and built the mill. The thread was spun in the mill and sent out among the women of the vicinity to be woven on hand looms. A settlement of houses for the mill help grew up around the mill and was known as "Factory Ground."

The first woolen manufactory in Agawam was a small mill for carding and fulling, built soon after the cotton mill by Justus and Calvin Bedortha. At first only custom work was done, but at the breaking out of the War of 1812 they started making broadcloth. The mill, after various changes, came into the ownership of the Agawam Company and stockinet was made during the Civil War.

Wallpaper was made about 1840 by Lyman Whitman and, in 1872, the Worthy Paper Company started the manufacture of high grade linen and ledger papers. This mill was built at Mittineague and used power from the Agawam River, on both sides of which the village lies.

By the aid of a lottery in 1782 a bridge across the Agawam River was "supported" and repaired. George Washington mentioned in his diary that on his second visit to this vicinity he crossed the Agawam on a bridge, but that the Connecticut "is crossed by scows sent over with poles." Agawam's Revolutionary War history is a part of Springfield's history, and they along with the rest of West Springfield were among the curious spectators when Burgoyne's army passed through on the way to Boston.

The years from 1795 to 1800 were full of weighty discussions over church matters. Finally, Agawam and Feeding Hills were divided into distinct parishes, and that there would be no misunderstanding over the boundary line between, a ditch was dug the entire length of the town. The meetinghouse was moved to the Feeding Hills Parish and the frame of a church was moved up from Suffield and erected on the common. Captain John Porter donated a bell and the church was painted largely through subscriptions of rye and flaxseed. In 1821 a greater degree of comfort came to the congregation when a chimney was added to the building and stoves set up.



The Baptist element continued to grow stronger and in 1830 they sold out their share of the church on the common for \$600 and built one of their own. It was a church building period for the town for soon the Congregationalists had a new house of worship in Feeding Hills and the Methodists built in the south part of Agawam.

As late as 1845, when the Congregational Church was moved to its present location it was voted to appoint four additional tything men to keep the children and young people quiet and the older people awake during the sermon.

Agawam became a separate town in 1855, retaining the Indian name meaning "Crooked River," first applied to the whole territory acquired by Pynchon and the other proprietors. Its area covered about twenty-two square miles. The population was about 1,500 and the first town meeting was held in the Methodist Church. The citizens had hardly gotten accustomed to ruling themselves when the Civil War began. One hundred and seventy-two men went from the town to aid the Union, fully one-tenth of the whole population, and ten more than the number required of the town. Twenty-two of these died either in battle or from disease. The women of the town formed a Soldiers' Relief Society and scraped lint, rolled bandages and made undergarments for the men at the front. The amount of money expended by the town for the war was nearly \$23,000.

The building of the south end bridge in 1879 gave Agawam a close contact with Springfield. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the incorporation of the town was celebrated with a pageant and other exercises at Riverside Park on August 12, 1930.

Indian remains have been found at several places along the Connecticut and Agawam rivers after spring freshets, and apparently there was an Indian burial place at a point once known as the "Steep Banks" in the vicinity of the Agawam Bridge.

"When a boy," wrote Sewall White, late historian of West Springfield, in his journal, "I was accustomed, with those of my sunny years to go and dig out of the bank (Agawam River) the old Indian skulls and look for their tools such as arrowheads, stone hoes, etc.

"We found some few of their stone hoes about six to eight inches in length, flat upon one side and round upon the other. The bodies of the Indians appeared to have been buried as deep as we are accustomed to do at this day, and a black, rich mould, from one to two

inches thick was to be found, being the flesh, which had returned to the earth as it was. Acorns, pumpkin seeds and some other kinds were found."

All old cemeteries are apt to have interesting inscriptions on the weathered tombstones, and a "graveyard" in Agawam has the following one:

"Come all you weary travelers  
Pray stop and drop a tear,  
As I traveled I made a full stop here."

The old saying that "murder will out" seems to be proved by another: "In memory of Harriet, who was murdered by her husband, Samuel Leonard, Dec. 14, 1825."

During the World War about two hundred men from Agawam served their country. The town now has the Wilson-Thompson Post of the American Legion, named after two of the local men who died in service.

In 1934, John C. Robinson, of Longmeadow, gave seven hundred acres of land along the Agawam River above Mittineague to the Commonwealth for a park. While it is still in the development stage, Conservation Commissioner York and the Federal Government have been coöperating in opening the grounds for varied kinds of recreational and scenic use.

It is a beautiful tract but little known to the public, even though it is only a few miles from a big city and close to an important trunk highway. Mr. Robinson spent several years in acquiring the land, a piece at a time, until he was able to give about five miles of river bank area to the public.

The French Catholic Church in the Agawam portion of Mittineague was built in 1874 at a cost of \$4,000. This was called St. William's and its first pastor was Rev. L. G. Garnier. Other churches built in more recent years are St. Anthony, by the Italian Catholics, St. David's Episcopal Church and Flower Memorial Methodist Episcopal. The two last named are in West Agawam.

In 1935 the Agawam Breeders' Association was organized and a track for horse racing built with an outlay of over a million dollars. Thousands of people visit the race track during the season when pari-mutual betting is carried on. This track is located in the south section on the site of the former Bowles Agawam Airport. This was

developed by the late Congressman Henry L. Bowles and was considered one of the finest and best equipped ports in New England. Part of the two hundred-acre tract on which the race course is located is still used for aviation purposes and has a large hangar and aviation office with scientific equipment.

Agawam, up to a few years ago, was an agricultural community, but recently it has become more of a residential district. The farms that remain are devoted to market gardening, dairying, poultry and tobacco. Some of the earliest crops of shade grown tobacco were grown in this town and the large fields covered with their white cloth "tents" were a strange sight. Up to ten years ago hundreds of acres of fine tobacco were raised and gave employment not only to residents of the town, but to others of nearby communities.

That the town has made a steady growth can be seen by a comparison of figures from the year 1877 with those of the present. Real and personal estate in the earlier year was \$1,141,422 and in 1935 they came to over nine million. The number of polls at present is 2,205 in contrast with five hundred and seventy-four in 1877, but the tax rate was \$12.70 per thousand that year and the recent figure is \$34.60.

Three manufacturing plants remain in Agawam, all of them old established firms. They are the Agawam Woolen Company, manufacturers of high grade woolen and cotton goods; the Porter Company, distillers of rye gin, both in Agawam Center, and the Worthy Paper Company, manufacturers of bond paper. In normal times these three concerns employ a total of more than two hundred hands.

Provin Mountain, the highest elevation in Agawam, rises on the border of Southwick. It is a trap-rock range and hundreds of miles of highways in this State and Connecticut have been constructed of stone taken from its quarries. Other heights are Mt. Pisgah, Liswell Hill and Buck Hill, but most of the town is meadowland.

The Hampden County Training School is located about a mile and a half south of Feeding Hills Center. It is for the purpose of educating youths convicted of slight offenses in the county's juvenile courts. Broad lawns encircle the building, which is of brick construction, and equipped similar to other modern boarding schools, with living quarters for the staff, dormitories for the inmates, and kitchen, laundry, dining rooms, auditorium and gymnasium. The farm con-



nected with the school comprises more than fifty acres and has one of the best dairies in western Massachusetts. The school gives training in agriculture and manual arts as well as in elementary grade subjects. At present the institution houses about thirty-five boys, besides the superintendent, matron and staff of teachers.

Henry J. Perkins was the man most responsible for changing modest and lovely Riverside Grove into the popular Riverside Park. From about 1912 until the depression following the war it was the Mecca of many a Sunday school picnic, family party or loving couple. It usually opened for the season around Memorial Day and drew crowds all through the summer. As Riverside Grove it was open to people without charge and was also without improvements or conveniences. When it became Riverside Park it had the largest merry-go-round in New England; a roller coaster with a half mile ride full of dips and curves; a dance hall, where for a moderate sum you might enjoy the whole evening; and a restaurant capable of serving many customers at once. Besides, there were games of skill and chance to catch the extra pennies, and occasionally a glass blower or other more or less educational exhibit. A baseball diamond attracted the more athletic and there were regular evenings for fireworks. At first the patrons came mainly on the "Sylvia," a small steamboat capable of holding three hundred and sixty-five people, which made regular trips from the landing at the foot of Elm Street, or on the trolley cars which were often full to the running boards. Later, when the hub-deep dusty roads were changed into hard surfaced ones, transportation was mainly by automobile and a big parking place was provided. Riverside Park was for many years an especially popular place for clambakes.

In the 1936 flood more than fifty families had to leave their homes on River Street. The water covered this and adjacent streets and settled over Main Street for a mile south of the junction of River and Main streets. Land damage was not severe and catastrophes were confined to the drowning of a large number of chickens.

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*Blandford, Settled by the Scotch-Irish*

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## CHAPTER V

### *Blandford, Settled by the Scotch-Irish*

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Blandford differs from all the other towns of the county in its manner of settlement. Before there was any village or even any house there, people passed through the region on the way from Boston and the Bay to Albany, so it is safe to call roads or trails the start of Blandford. The region belonged in what was called "Suffield Equivalent Lands," because of a swap made between Massachusetts and Connecticut. Christopher Jacob Lawton, lawyer and land speculator, became the owner of this tract and other lands to the west known as Housatunnock. He was naturally interested in having people come into the region and thought a tavern out beyond Westfield would be a help, there being, as he said, "no house for the space of forty miles." The Legislature granted him three hundred acres somewhere not less than fifteen miles from an established town, provided that within a reasonable time he erected on it "a Dwelling House forty-four feet long, Eighteen feet wide & eight feet Post at least, and also a Suitable Stable for horses," and fulfilled a number of other regulations.

By fall of 1733 Lawton had his tavern built and running with Joseph Pixley, Jr., approved by the court as innkeeper, but it was far from being the structure the legislators had visualized. Tradition says that for several years it had neither floor nor chimney, but a fire fed by logs eight or ten feet long, drawn in by horse, was kept burning on the ground in the center, the smoke passing out through a hole in the roof. Crude though the tavern was it must have been a solace to the travelers on the road to the westward and one which they would be loath to leave, knowing there was no other for such a distance beyond.

Pixley's Tavern stood in the southwest part of the town and, though it was the first house to be built there, it had almost no part in the settlement of the town itself. Nor did this one house draw others

to neighbor it as in most new towns, but the settlement came about in an entirely different way. A great migration of Scotch people from the North of Ireland to this country started in 1718, following a request to Governor Shute, of Massachusetts Bay, for "suitable encouragement" to "transport" themselves. The parchment had three hundred and eighteen signers, only thirteen of whom had to make their "marks," an unusually small proportion for those days. Five ships are supposed to have come over not long apart, bringing seven or eight hundred of these independent, courageous pioneers. The sturdy Scotch women brought their flax wheels with them and industriously turned out a new product of great interest. They gave an exhibition on Boston Common in the spring of 1719 and the most skillful were awarded prizes. Long years of persecution by the Catholics in the North of Ireland had made these Scotch descendants clanish and intolerant, but it had also developed and hardened their inherited vein of iron. They sought a place where they might have homes and a church of their own with "an opportunity of worshipping God according to the dictates of conscience and the rules of his inspired Word." Groups of families went out over a period of years and settled Pelham, Colrain and other towns. The group which finally settled Blandford did not go directly there from Boston. Some fifty families tried a settlement in Worcester, but religious differences made that unsatisfactory and their stay was stormy and brief. Hopkinton was their next choice, and there they bought and built, but again the old New England orthodox faith was against them and they came to realize that only on new unsettled lands could they hope to worship and regulate town affairs as they chose.

It seems natural that Jacob Lawton in his endeavors to dispose of his "Suffield Equivalent Lands" should get in touch with the unhappy Ulsterites in Hopkinton and an agreement was signed on July 8, 1735, for the settlement of sixty families in the region beyond Westfield. Now began a busy and anxious time for these Scotch families as they must first sell the holdings on which they were living—no easy matter in a place where idle land abounded. As a preliminary to the migration two young men were sent ahead to mark the course and erect a few log huts for temporary shelter. They arrived at the future center of the town the last day of April, just along with a three-day snow storm which piled up nearly four feet deep. They were

ten miles from Westfield, seven miles from the nearest house and dependent on a spark from a stone for a fire.

The town had already been plotted and apportioned by lot and now it was divided into "settling lots" and "farm lots," the "first division" being laid out along the "Great and General road." Ten acres were set aside for the church and whether by chance or intentionally a beautiful location was chosen. This has remained intact for public use in the way of schools and road and burial ground and none has dared make it otherwise. Moreover, the inhabitants have been required to keep the common in order; as early as 1742 a fine of six shillings was imposed on every man who did not appear at eight o'clock to work on the common. Hugh Black was the first man who came with his family and the next was James Baird, an Englishman, who built nearly four miles away. The following spring the rest of the families arrived, probably making the journey in fairly large groups, and coming through Brookfield, Warren, Palmer and Springfield. From "Sackett's Tavern" beyond Westfield they ascended the mountain by way of the "Devil's Stairs," so-called because of the steepness and rockiness of the way. One historian notes that a certain group accomplished but two miles on the first day up this steep ascent, which was perhaps all that could be expected in view of the fact they were encumbered with goods and furniture of every description and had with them some small children. The place which is now called the Causeway was then a thick hemlock swamp which took them one whole day to cut a path through. Then began the business of building homes from logs newly chopped on their own land, of clearing the fields for planting and mowing, and of opening trails between various dwellings and connecting them with the main avenue of travel. The frame of the meetinghouse was set up in this town of Glasgow, as the people fondly called it, in 1740, but it stood for a whole year exposed to the breezes before boards were brought from Southampton and Westfield to close it in. The people had been given seven years before they would be required to reach this point and they did not furnish window glass for five years more. Thirteen long, cold, windy winters passed in which the people sat on backless benches, wrapped in their warmest clothes, while the preacher waved his mittened hands and stamped his numbing feet as he warmed their congealing blood with foreordination, predestination, infant damnation and the fires of hell.



As was customary, and even necessary, a tavern was opened close by the church, where people gathered between services on the Sabbath and to which town meetings were adjourned when in need of warmth and inspiration. In fact, the first tavern kept by the Hustons antedated the meetinghouse and filled a great need, not only as a gathering place for the new town, but for the increasing number of travelers on the "great road." Almost a score of taverns have followed this first one and sometimes they were filled to overflowing with companies of soldiers or groups of passing traders.

John Caldwell was the first person who is known to have preached in Glasgow and he was invited in 1741 to accept the parish, but while the matter was under consideration his character was questioned and he was never settled. The people tried several preachers and finally asked the presbytery for permission to send to Ireland and make choice there. Rev. John Harvey, to whose recommendation was signed the name of Jonathan Edwards, was a university graduate and preached four times, but drunkenness and immoralities were charged against him and he left. The man who was sent abroad for a pastor brought back Mr. McNeil, but he did not suit the people either. They asked that a man should be tried out for a longer period than the customary six weeks before being settled, and finally, in 1744, agreed on Rev. William McClenathan, who was to have \$93 salary and \$93 settlement fee as well as a sixty-acre lot for his own. The town tended to moving him and his goods from Boston and the following year every man in town above twenty-one years was required to work one day for the minister getting his wood and repairing his house.

Mr. McClenathan seems to have been an able man and was twice sent abroad on town business, but he was suddenly dismissed because, having become interested in the war with the French while he was acting as representative in Boston and receiving both chaplain's and a captain's commission, he "sold" his men to another officer. As he was the minister and had promised to defend and protect those who enlisted under him, this was considered traitorous and he was put on trial and dismissed. Four of the Blandford enlisted young men died, which probably clinched the feeling against the minister.

When church affairs seemed fairly settled the inhabitants of the Suffield Equivalent Lands petitioned the Legislature, in 1741, to be

erected into a township. The petition was granted and they were given the name of "Blandford," thus losing the gift of a bell for the church which they had been promised by the inhabitants of Glasgow in Scotland if they continued to use that name. "Blandford" was the name of the ship in which Governor Belcher had come over in the year 1730 and the commander of the vessel had received a gift of two hundred pounds by vote of the General Court for his respectful treatment of His Excellency. The name of Glasgow, however, clung and was used off and on for many years by the devoted Scots.

Through all this time the "Great Road" increasingly played an important part in the new town and taverns were natural accompaniments. The innkeepers were licensed and supposed to be men of good standing. Their hospitality was more like that of the old-fashioned home than of the modern hotel. Many travelers carried their own food with them and sometimes that for their horses also, but the inns furnished drink and shelter. Often accommodations for the night were no more than a chance to lie in a semi-circle with other tired travelers, feet to the open fire and head on the rolled-up baggage. It was a place of meeting, too, where bargains were made, horses traded, deeds made out, and a great deal of business carried on. It was the newspaper of the neighborhood, where information was given out by word of mouth and posted notice, and where local happenings were discussed. It was a natural gathering place for political meetings and a sort of social club. But for men only! There was a housewife and often a bar-maid to wait on the men who frequented the tavern, but women were adjuncts, though necessary ones, and the early history of New England towns lists few women's names except as one gets them from the tombstones and marriage records.

The tavern supplemented the church and innkeepers were assigned prominent seats in the sanctuary. Often they were deacons as well as innkeepers and they received titles befitting their standing. If an innkeeper did his part well he would be advanced from yeoman to gentlemen, as were Samuel Sloper, Justus Ashmun, several of the Boies family and many others.

The annual sales of liquor were enormous and on training days hardly a male citizen of the town went to bed sober. One keeper of the corner tavern said he took in over three hundred dollars on one

such day. Flip, made of strong beer, sweetened with molasses or dried pumpkin and with a dash of rum added, was very popular. Sling, grog and black-strap were other old-time drinks of increasing potency, while plain hard cider was to be found in every cellar. One man is said to have put two hundred barrels a year in his own cellar, thirty of which were for family use.

The Indian trail through the town to the west became a bridle path widened by foot of horse and man and finally was laid out as a road in 1759. But it comes into county road records as early as 1754, though not legally surveyed at that time. It was, in a sense, a military road almost from the first, though the county assisted in keeping it in order. Still the town was fined in 1756 for the bad condition the road was in. Over it General Knox made his famous trip from Ticonderoga to Boston and what a sight it must have been to see the "42 exceeding strong sleds" and "80 yoke of oxen" going through the town. The small boys had their fill of cannon and mortars while preparation was being made to go down "the tremendous Glasgow mountain." It has been said of Blandford that "there is no spot where a wagon would stand without having its wheels blocked" and even the stolid oxen must have been weary of the ups and downs before that trip was over. The inhabitants of Berkshire County once petitioned the Legislature that a lottery be held for the benefit of the road and urged it as a patriotic measure. This encouraged those interested in two rival routes to put forth their claims for attention and the sum authorized was not to exceed \$200,000. It seems an impossible sum to be raised in those frugal days, but climbing a height of 1,460 feet could not be done for nothing.

The Beech Hill section of Blandford was the home of Squire Jedediah Smith, farmer, lumberman, cidemaker, distiller, gentleman and judge, typical of the leading men of the times. For many years District Court was held at his house and he represented the town at the General Court. Blandford citizens evidently appreciated his services for they numbered large among his clients. Drunkenness furnished him many cases, but "boiling maple Shugar" on the Lord's Day and "Swearing one Profane Oath" and being on the highway on the Sabbath without "necessity or charity" add variety.

A "mansion house" sounds like a very fine structure and is mentioned more than once in Blandford records, but it seems simply to



mean a frame building a little more roomy than the average. The cellar stairs of "solid quartered oak," spoken of in connection with the old Taggart Tavern, sound palatial, but were really very primitive in appearance. The "salt-box" type of house with two stories in front and one at the back under the long, sloping roof was familiar to the region, but the little one-story cottage set close to the ground and with an unfinished loft above the first floor was common.

Work was the common lot, whether a man was yeoman or squire, and laziness and shiftlessness carried with them the natural penalty of going without. Strangers were watched when they came to town and the able-bodied and willing were welcome, while the others were legally warned to depart. To work "like a beaver" was a term easily understood for they dammed more than one stream and "beaver meadows" can still be seen. Man followed the beaver in building dams, and it was not many years that the settlers had to take the long journey to a neighboring town for boards or ground grain. The first gristmill was established in the town by 1748 and probably three years earlier, and there was usually one in each district running at the same time. Small hand mortars were in use in many homes for pounding and cracking the corn, but the product was coarse and the labor hard and slow. David Campbell was an early miller, who by 1760 had set up a "Corn-mill, saw-mill and Bolting Mill." His buildings were on an island in Little River, first approached by a ford, but later the town made an appropriation for building a bridge to reach them. The first sawmill was probably on Potash Brook; another was on the "Gore Lane" and "Blair's mill" on the "Branch" was well known.

Potash Brook received its name from the industry carried on there and which was necessary to any new town. The abundance of wood meant plenty of ashes and its leached product was needed in making soap. Robert Huston, one of the original settlers, was a tanner, another necessary workman in a new town. There were cows' and sheep's hides as well as those of bear and deer and other wild animals to be prepared for shoes, harness, and clothing, and hemlock bark was plenty. This was crushed between stone and wooden wheels turned by horses.

The village blacksmith was another important person and his forge a gathering place second to the inn. He brought in the bar iron in its rough state and from it fashioned tools, hinges or whatever

was needed for house or farm. Sometimes the farmer bought from him the long slender rods and in the kitchen in the cold winter evenings cut and hammered his precious nails. Not an ounce was wasted, but when a tool gave out it was shaped over into a smaller tool, and in its last stages was hammered flat and used to face the share of the wooden plough. Bricks were occasionally made in various places and used especially to top off a chimney whose lower part was often built of stone. A strewing of limestone boulders across the town led to the establishment of various kilns to provide the mortar for laying up the coarse homemade bricks. Charcoal pits were constructed here and there also. Everybody, more or less, worked in wood and some very fine household and farm implements were produced by some men and andirons by others. No minerals abound in Blandford, but tradition tells of the discovery by John Baird of a mass of lead and silver ore in the northern part of the town. When he attempted to show the property to a likely purchaser, a heavy fog arose and Baird, who was superstitious, would never try again to locate it.

Another strange story of vague meaning is told of Squire Bartholomew, who was working alone one day in the depths of the heavy woods. He sat down by the brook to eat his solitary lunch and on going back to where he had left his jackknife on the log where he was working he found a stranger seated in his place. The man held out the knife toward the owner and at the same time pointed down the brook and the squire obeyed the silent signal.

A more dangerous picture of loneliness is given in the tale of Jonathan Walker, who cut his foot badly and needed assistance. He lived several miles from the nearest neighbors and his wife did not dare leave him to go down the trail for help. She took some of the bloody bandages from her husband's wounds, fastened them around the horse's neck and started him toward the settlement. The animal faithfully went on in the direction he was started and carried the silent but startling message that help was needed.

In the diary of Rev. Mr. Ballantine, of Westfield, is an entry concerning the neighbor town:

"Awakened this morning by the ringing of the bell to collect men to go in quest of a lad in Blandford, who was lost. He was absent three nights, but was found alive. His father and mother had forsaken him, but the Lord had mercy. A

man in Murrayfield knew the child was lost and thought he heard a child cry, but he had a hired team and could not afford to let it lie still while he searched."

Rather strangely the early records say nothing about schools, in spite of the fact that the proprietors were expected to set aside a lot of sixty acres for their benefit. Probably parents taught their children at home what little they could and it was James Carter, a sea captain, who is said to have kept the first school in the house of Robert Black, "because it had two rooms." No school was taught by a woman until 1770. In spite of the lack of facilities nearly all of the men and some of the women in the town could read and write.

Smallpox was a regular scourge in this as in other towns and in 1759 the town was considering building a pesthouse, but inoculation was too modern and nothing was done about it.

Blandford was far from being a quiet, peaceful town during the French and Indian War. Early in the settlement three forts were built about a mile apart to which the people might go in time of danger. These were about sixty feet square, of fine timbers, squared and smoothed. Houses or barracks eleven feet wide faced the center of the fort, with shingled roofs sloping up against the walls. Mr. Keep, who has passed down to us much local history, relates as follows:

"For more than a year all the families were collected every night into these forts as a safe lodging place. And after the people presumed to lodge in their own dwellings the cases were frequent, in which, on an alarm, they would in the dead of night hurry with their families to the fort. When they were in the field for work they would take with them their arms, set one man as a sentinel while the others labored; nor did they deem it safe to meet on the Sabbath for religious worship except they took with them their arms."

Some old men who found this sort of life too strenuous left this frontier town and went to quieter places to end their days. No record is found of how great was the exodus, but the matter was discussed in the town meeting and the decision made was that those who left must pay their taxes along with those who remained.

"Ranging Forces" were organized to scout the woods in 1744 and Blandford men, no doubt, were ready and able. They made



their camps on the bare ground and carried on their backs their muskets, ammunition and equipment, as well as provisions. Trained dogs sometimes accompanied them and a bounty of thirty pounds on every Indian scalp made ears and eyes the keener. Fast days were appointed by the Governor that the people in the homes might do their part. Sometimes there was preaching at the fort on week days and the armed garrison was expected to attend the services in the church on the Sabbath. Nor was there too much religion acquired by the soldiers for Colonel Ephraim Williams wrote to his cousin: "We are a wicked, profane army, more especially New York troops and Rhode Island, nothing to be heard among a great part of them but the language of hell."

The town was full of soldiers who must be cared for and Rev. James Morton, who was pastor at this time, aimed to do his part, but some of his flock censured him for making his house like a tavern and "Rendering himself odeous" for the sake of gain. A council was called in the middle of the winter to consider the matter, but they sided with the minister and excused him on the grounds of Christianity, humanity and common civility.

One neighborhood in Blandford received the name of "Devil's half acre." It had a schoolhouse on it, where Methodist meetings were often held and the lively boys of the vicinity took great pleasure in disturbing the gatherings. Reverend Daniel Butler called the residents there "ignorant and quarrelsome" and they seem to have been given to minor law suits, so perhaps the name referred to more trouble than was caused by the boys.

The early 1800's saw a change in the roads of Blandford with the coming of the turnpike, known as the Hampden and Berkshire. It approached the center by an easier grade than the first settlers had come and pushed on westerly to Lee. The turnpike was kept in repair by an incorporated company which held up travelers by a toll gate every ten miles and collected revenue. The tolls were graduated from twenty-five cents for coach or chariot to three cents by the dozen for sheep or swine. If the tires of the vehicle were six inches or more in width the fee was cut in half, as such tires would do less damage to the road. Some rebelled at paying for what they considered they should have free use of as in the past and in a few cases "shunpikes" were built so that people could pass around the toll gate rather than

through it. A woman of whom toll was demanded drove the keeper of the toll gate into his house with a horse whip. Law suits followed these cases, but the turnpike always won. Many teams of two to six yoke of oxen passed over the road and great droves of cattle, sheep and hogs went through on the way to the Brighton market. A man in North Blandford, who used to keep the herd drivers over night at his house, was reported to take toll of the hogs sheltered in his barn by letting one drop down through a trap door in the floor.

The northern part of the town has its stories as well as the center. There was the Taggart School named for the Widow Taggart, who bequeathed at her death to the third school district in Blandford "1200 Dolls.," as it reads on the old stone in the burying ground. This is really \$1,200 and, while an aid to education, has also promoted litigation. At one time a schoolhouse stood in the district on land partly claimed by one individual and partly by another. One morning the structure was found cut completely in two from top to bottom.

In the Green Woods at the north end it was considered unsafe to be out alone in the evening for fear of wolves and catamounts. There John Noble made a speedy trip to a friend's house after he had looked back and had seen a whole pack of wolves cross his path. At another time, when on his way to market with a load of hams, he had to throw them out one by one to stave off the ravening creatures.

Captain Levi Pease was living in Blandford at the time of the Revolutionary War and was often the bearer of important despatches from General Thomas on the northern frontier to headquarters. He would cross a lake alone at night in a canoe, stretched out at full length and using his hands as paddles, then lie concealed during the daytime. Commissary Wadsworth often trusted him with a saddlebag full of money with which to purchase cattle and horses and took no receipt for it. His business led him to an intimate acquaintance with land and people in Connecticut and Massachusetts, so that he turned naturally to stagecoaching when the war was over and has sometimes been called the "father" of that movement. At first he was laughed at and often ran with empty coaches, but he soon began to carry the mail and built up a large business.

The Baird Tavern had a neverfailing well of cold water much prized by the occupants of the stagecoaches, two of which passed in the early 'eighties each day going and coming. Each coach was

drawn by four horses and when they were running "express" the driver would blow his horn a half mile from the stopping place and fresh horses would be run out of the stable ready to be hitched on without delay. Sometimes in the busy season of the traveling year, which was in winter, there would be forty or fifty teams at one inn over night. Farmers drove to Hartford, Springfield or even Boston with their produce and brought back a year's supply of the few necessary things not raised on the farm. Stage driving sometimes descended from father to son and at a convention of old drivers held in Springfield in 1859, the third generation of stage drivers was represented. Getting the mail through was one of the duties of the driver and he prided himself on his record. Watson Boise, who at one time was interested in some forty stage routes in western Massachusetts, once forded Little River in freshet time after the bridge had been washed away, when only the heads of the horses showed above water.

The coming of the railroad changed all this and Blandford roads no longer saw all the traffic to the westward.

Cushing Eels is a name of which Blandford is very proud. Professor Stephen Penrose, president emeritus of Whitman College, said of him at the Blandford bicentennial:

"Of all the men who have gone from Blandford, there is not one who has made a deeper impression on the world and who has impressed himself more on mankind by his character than Cushing Eels. He graduated from Williams in 1834, was ordained for foreign mission work in 1837 and in 1838 departed from the life of Blandford and the East for the West. He lived a life so heroic, so saintly, so self-sacrificing that he came to be known as the 'St. Paul' of the Pacific Northwest."

His great work was the founding of Whitman College.

Another interesting Blandford personality is Dennison Card Healy, born in 1812. He invented a waterpower machine for turning wooden bowls, graduated in size, out of a block of rough, hard maple. These were marketed as nests of bowls in New York. Later he turned out clock pulleys, boxes, files and parasol and brush broom handles, which were shipped to all parts of the world.

The story of Blandford would not be complete without mentioning the Union Agricultural and Horticultural Society, organized in 1859



as the outgrowth of a farmers' club. The early fairs were held on the town common and the village street was used for races and parades. After the present fine white Colonial church replaced the old meeting-house the old structure was used as a barn for horse and cattle exhibits at the fair. They now have a fine fair ground of their own on the top of the hill just beyond the church and their fair on the first Monday in September is an old home day for the citizens.

The Blandford Club, center of the activities of the summer residents, was founded in 1909 and its clubhouse is a Colonial mansion built in 1822. A nine-hole golf course has been added to the property and tournaments and dances and card parties are frequently held.

Mrs. Josephine E. S. Porter, of New Haven, bought a house in Blandford for a summer residence about 1885. At that time there was no public library in the town and she brought several hundred volumes from her home and loaned them to people. Mrs. Porter gave the present library building to the town in 1892 as a memorial to her son, Edgar Sheffield Porter. Judge Utley, of Worcester, added a gift of \$10,000 in memory of his mother, Theodocia Knox, who was born in Blandford.

The Deane Memorial Building houses both the town hall and the consolidated school. It was the gift of Dr. Wallace H. Deane, for many years resident physician of Blandford. The chapel in the center of the town was built by Miss Electa B. Watson and Miss Harriet Hinsdale in 1898. When the schools moved in to the Memorial Building, in 1922, the Grange bought the old schoolhouse and made it over into a hall for their meetings.

The list of Blandford minerals as compiled by Dr. Shurtlef, a native of the town, is quite imposing and includes limestone, asbestos, rose quartz, granite, feldspar, mica, graphite and the "lost" lead and silver mine. There is said to be a large fossil footprint on a ledge near the Cross place and the impression of a snake can be seen on a rock in Beulah Land. Soapstone and whetstone quarries have been operated in Blandford.

Blandford blueberries are unusually fine and find a ready market. Both the high and the low are common to the vicinity, but the latter is more common and much sweeter.

Dr. Plumb Brown, of Springfield, who summers in Blandford, has a list of about three hundred flowers of different varieties which grow

in the town. But it is a flowering shrub that calls to mind the name of Blandford when each year during "laurel time" the Ladies' Benevolent Society of the church serves its annual "Laurel Tea" in the chapel.

Blandford is a native white pine country and has several fine groves of these trees, of which the most notable are those that remain on the ten-acre lot set aside by the first settlers for a common. About forty-six varieties of other trees cover the hillsides and there is a possibility that the chestnut trees swept away by the blight some years ago may again grow up and be a joy to young and old.

Cobble Mountain Dam, newly constructed in the south part of the town, for the use of the city of Springfield, is the highest earth dam in the world. The base of the dam is over 1,500 feet thick, but it slopes to fifty feet at the top. The reservoir floods about 1,200 acres of land and when full holds 25,000,000,000 gallons of water.

In the summer of 1935 Blandford celebrated her bicentennial with a fine two-day program of events, which included a historical parade. A large and well-arranged collection of antiques was exhibited in one of the houses as a special feature of the occasion.

Blandford covers forty-nine square miles in area and has a population of about five hundred people. Walnut Hill, 1,760 feet, is the highest elevation. Other hills whose names are understandable are Beech, Birch and Pebble, but "Pudding Hill" and Dug Hill arouse the curiosity. Potash Brook, no doubt, earned its name and probably Bedlam Brook did also.

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*Brimfield and Steerage Rock*

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## CHAPTER VI

### *Brimfield and Steerage Rock*

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The town of Brimfield originally extended eight miles east from the east boundary of Springfield and included the towns of Monson, Wales, and Holland, and parts of Warren and Palmer. The town lies at an average elevation of about 1,200 feet and the hills that surround it are irregular, but not jagged in outline. The soil on Tower Hill is upland loam, quite free from the boulders which either east or west of this hill make cultivation difficult. Bog ore was formerly dug in Brimfield and carried to the iron works at Stafford, Connecticut. Alum Pond is mistakenly said to be so-called from its very solid white bottom and the clearness of the water. Roger Williams says that "Allum" was the Nipmuck word for dog. Sherman's Pond is larger and shallower and contains about sixty acres.

In the western part of the town is Elbow Brook, emptying into the Quaboag at the elbow. Other brooks are Treat, named for the first minister, Penny, Bottle and Erwin's. Along these watercourses are natural meadows, whose annual crop of swale hay was highly prized by the early settlers. The streams flowing through these meadows were dammed so that the overflow would add to their fertility. The water was usually let off in May. Carts were few, so the hay when cut might be piled on the branches of a felled tree and drawn to one spot and stacked. The fall rains often flooded some regions and damaged the haystacks and for that reason one section came to be known as "Poor meadow."

Sheep Pasture Hill lies north of the village street and Steerage Rock is a large boulder on the top of a ridge from which the Indians took their bearings. Breakneck Hill is on the Sturbridge Road. On the hills foxes still have their holes and their runs. Deer reeves continued to be appointed as late as 1789, when it is said the deer disappeared because they were so persistently hunted during the Revolutionary War when buckskin breeches were in great demand. Oak trees were

more numerous than any other kinds. The several varieties were swamp, black, red, white, yellow and gray. The mast furnished food for the swine, which were allowed to run at large, if yoked and ringed, from the first of April to the last of October. Chestnut trees abounded, with pines and birches, while maples and elms dotted the meadows. "Popple," pepperidge and basket ash are named in the old records. Wild grape vines were found everywhere and some of them



STEERAGE ROCK, BRIMFIELD

of a white variety grew to a great age and were very productive. Pasture lands were held in common and not until 1800 were cattle restrained from running at large.

Brimfield has experienced the usual variety in New England climate. In 1815 there was a furious wind storm, which blew down the horse sheds and so frightened some of the people that they sought refuge in their cellars. The season of 1816 had some frost every month and was so discouraging that many decided to go West. 1869 was remarkable for a long-continued rain, when dams broke and a chasm sixty feet wide and twenty deep was washed out in the highway.



The great blizzard of 1888, when farmers had to tunnel the snow to get to their barns, added to the variety.

There is a tradition that the Indians, in their wasteful method of clearing land for cultivation and for early grazing of the deer, had burned over the land near the present village site, laying bare about 2,000 acres; and they had an important fort on the highest point of Indian Hill, north of Sherman's Pond. Four important Indian trails met here and the view in every direction was extensive. A good spring of water was near by. The fort was known to the English authorities as Quaboag Old Fort and agents sent at different times with messages to the Indians made it their stopping place. The early settlers followed the customs of the Indians in planting corn. The proper time was when the young oak leaf was as big as a mouse's ear and the proper method was to hill the corn, putting beneath the kernels a fish for plant food. The Indian family, John and Sarah Quan, with their children, who once lived near Alum Pond, were of the Mohegan tribe. Around one rock, which seems to have been a favorite resort for game, arrowheads have been found in large numbers.

The first settlers from Springfield camped out for the summer while cultivating their fields and went back to the mother town for the winter. But their tents were torn in pieces by the Indians and their provisions plundered, so the enterprise was abandoned. Afterward two blockhouses were constructed, to which the inhabitants could retreat in time of danger. The town was first known as "the Plantation adjoining Springfield to the east of Springfield," and it is stated in the records of the committee of five appointed by the General Court to lay it out that for the sake of convenience they abbreviated it to Brimfield. They first visited the region in September, 1701, accompanied by about twenty others from Springfield, but after spending two days they returned, unable to decide where the town plot should be located. The committee had been instructed to take possession within one year's time from their appointment in June, settle ten families within three years and seventy within five years, as well as a learned and pious minister. Chicopee Hill, now known as Grout's Hill in Monson, was finally chosen for the center of the town and grants were made to thirteen persons, but they never settled, giving for a reason "the Distress of War." Indian depredations put a stop to the settlement of new townships for a time and, in 1709, the Gen-

eral Court prolonged the time allotted for the settlement of Brimfield. Later, a strip of land three miles wide was added on the eastern border and what is now the Tower Hill Road chosen for the town street. A road eight rods wide was laid out and the house-lots were to be one hundred and sixty rods deep. But though the land on Tower Hill was better than elsewhere, the first settlers chose to build their houses in a more sheltered spot.

Nathaniel Hitchcock appears to have been the first settler, a name perpetuated in the history of the town, and David Morgan, the second, each having one hundred and twenty acres. One hundred and sixty-nine lots of this size were laid out and nine of sixty acres. Rev. Mr. Treat was assigned one hundred and twenty acres. William Pynchon and Obadiah Cooley were given grants, though they did not reside in Brimfield, because they had provided iron work for the first sawmill, and two others had land because of having "provided nails of all sorts" sufficient for finishing the meetinghouse. This final division of land was made in June, 1731, and was a very complicated matter, as the division had previously been made and then voted void, though some of the settlers had already improved their land "with great Hazzard of their lives and substance, living on and defending the same."

A number of small grants of land had previously been made at various times to different persons. One of these was in 1657 to Richard Fellows at Chicopee River, that he might build a house for the entertainment of travelers, both horse and man, and furnish beer, wine and strong liquors. This tavern he built, but did not occupy it more than two years, and from the fact that some farm implements were dug up there years later, it is supposed that fear of the Indians led him to abandon the place.

As early as 1721 the inhabitants took the preliminary steps toward the erection of a meetinghouse, forty by forty-five feet, and the following year it was raised and roofed, but remained incomplete for more than fifteen years. It was a plain, barn-like building, with neither chimney nor steeple. The upper windows, five on a side, probably had wooden shutters and the lower ones, four on a side, were diamond-paned and hung on hinges. The pulpit, which was voted built in 1732, was on the north side and there were doors on the other three sides. At first the seats were long benches, perhaps backless, but square pews

were voted to be built along the walls soon after the pulpit was completed. A cushion was voted to be provided for the pulpit, but it was not paid for until three years later and the record does not show whether it was intended for the Bible or the preacher to rest on. The young men got permission to build a pew for themselves in the gallery on one side and eight young women followed suit by securing a big pew opposite. As in other country towns the "seating" of the meetinghouse, or, as it was sometimes called, the "dignifying" of the seats was a difficult task, deacon's wives and widows of ordinary men making more trouble than other classes. In 1757 the committee in charge was instructed to seat men and their wives together, but the young people still sat in the gallery and the poor sat on gallery or pulpit stairs.

Brimfield is one of the few towns which did not quarrel over the position of the meetinghouse. Eight pounds was raised in 1761 "to color the outside of the meeting-house." This must be a sign of both progress and prosperity, as paint on buildings was the exception rather than the rule before the Revolution. The time came, however, when "repairing and propping" the meetinghouse seemed necessary and soon after that a new place of worship was being constructed. The old meetinghouse was sold for \$100 and was taken down and some of the paneling used in the Bliss Tavern. The town voted \$500 for the raising of the new church and people came from far and near on the appointed day. Each district furnished a specified number of timbers, fourteen inches square and twenty-six feet long. Spikes were bought and ropes hired. Meals were furnished for the day at town expense. These and "keeping the horses" cost \$343. One whole side was raised at a time. Mr. Carter, the contractor, went up with it. Only one man was injured, and he seems not to have been quite sober enough to look out for his own footing. The bill for liquor: "Rum, Sugar, Brandy, Lemmons and Wine," was \$121.22. The contract for building was made in 1805 and Mr. Carter was paid the full sum of \$6,666.67 in 1808, though the pews were not all sold until six years later. This new meetinghouse had a steeple and rather imposing columns in front. The sittings were arranged in square pews so that about one-third of the audience did not face the minister. Crimson silk hangings decorated the back of the pulpit, and deaf people were allowed to sit beside the minister. The only provision



for warmth was by dint of vigorous stamping between the parts of the service, or by the use of foot stoves, which was mainly confined to the women and children. These foot stoves were small, pierced metal boxes which stood on wooden legs and held hot coals. In some of the early log meetinghouses fur bags made of wolf skins were nailed to the seats and in the winter church attendants thrust their feet into them. The family dog was sometimes permitted to attend church and lie on his master's feet. In 1819 the town refused to install a stove, but ordered two doors hung on the stairs to keep the cold from the galleries. Liberty was given to individuals to put up a stove, but when one man was asked for a contribution he declined on the ground that the preaching made it hot enough for anybody. This meetinghouse had a bell which was cracked in about a year's time and another bought. A lightning rod was put up before the stove was put in, the fire from heaven evidently being feared more than the man-made fire was coveted. A third bell was hung in 1819 and remained in use until the church was burned in 1847. The bell-ringer struck the noonday hour and nine o'clock bed time, as well as striking the age of a person who died and tolling when the funeral procession was on its way to the burial place. Town meetings were still held in the place of worship and one vote taken was against allowing anyone to sit on top of the pews or to enter the pulpit during town meeting. They were evidently getting quite particular about the care of the meetinghouse at this time for it was also recommended that the owners of pews procure sand-boxes for them. The church was remodeled in 1838 and lower rooms added, but in less than ten years it caught fire from an overheated stovepipe and burned to the ground. A new church was immediately built and dedicated and later twice remodeled. The stovepipes that once ran the whole length of the audience room, rusty and dusty and dripping soot, were removed and furnaces installed. The lower floor of the church was used as a town hall, though a parish separate from the town was organized in 1832.

There was no choir in the church until 1786 and the fine hymn tunes used were "lined" or "deaconed" out. The cabinet organ purchased in 1854 was preceded by the violin, bass viol, flute, clarionet and bassoon. Intentions of marriage were read by the town clerk just before the close of services. He always caused some commotion when he rose in his seat and said: "Please to take notice" and

gave the names. Afternoon service was given up in 1873 on account of the minister's health and was never resumed. The Sunday school was introduced about 1819. A two-story building, containing a conference hall above and shops below, was built in 1820 and was the scene of many social and religious gatherings. On one occasion when the deacons knowing there would be no preacher had kept away, Uncle Benjamin Sherman was induced to take charge of the meeting. He entered the desk and made the announcement: "No minister, no deacon, no nothing, no preparation for nothing. Let's pray."

The horse sheds, or "horse houses," did not appear on the records until 1752, when three men were given permission to build some, and from then on the horses seem to have been well protected.

The Adventists began holding meetings in the conference hall in 1844 and sometimes held camp meeting on some farm. Finally, a small chapel was built. The Church of Christ started its meetings in a schoolhouse in East Brimfield and in 1872 dedicated a church. The Moravians, or United Brethren, made their start in West Brimfield, about 1855, and eventually became strong enough to build a church, which was rebuilt after being burned.

The early log houses soon gave way to frame ones of varying styles in succeeding years. The salt-box, with its long rear roof, was followed by those of one or two full stories with a huge central chimney and tiny front hall. Sometimes a house had a kitchen bed room, very handy for the mother of small children, or for the old folks, who could get some warmth from the kitchen fireplace. This was often of mammoth size and took logs that could only be handled with a bar or hand-spike. Above the brick oven, which imparted such a flavor to the slow cooking foods, was a cupboard which held herbs and books and crockery and sometimes a little hard liquor. Hooks in ceilings held long poles from which were hung strings of apples or pumpkins to dry. Red paint was the first color used as it was the cheapest and most durable.

About 1800 the square house with the roof running up to a point in the center began to be built, and then came the more pretentious ones with pillars and portico and later still the comfortable piazza.

Captain John Sherman was the last in town to wear the colonial costume of small clothes, knee buckles and cocked hat. At first all clothing was of home manufacture. The wool was cut from sheep

raised on the farm, and there carried through all the various processes of washing, carding, spinning and weaving. About 1800 wool began to be carded by machine, of which there were several run by water-power in various parts of the town. Flax was raised, rotted, hatched and spun, "tow cloth" being used for ordinary summer wear and the fine thread being woven into sheetings and shirtings. The dye tub stood in the chimney corner and out of it might come indigo blue, or butternut brown, or some other homemade coloring. Boys and men went barefoot in the summer time, and even until quite cold weather. Many a boy sent to the barn to milk shot a few squirts over his chilly toes. Hats, too, were not common until a boy was ten or twelve years old.

Hospitality was the prominent characteristic of social life. Every raising of a frame was attended by neighbors in crowds. The minister offered prayer. The workmen and assistants paraded on the ridge-pole. A bottle of liquor was passed from hand to mouth along the line and some rhymes said by those at each end. The people turned work into play by holding apple-bees, husking-bees, spinning-bees, and quilting-bees, with their accompanying suppers. Dancing parties were common and several houses had rooms with high arched ceilings, which were rented for such affairs.

Floors were scrubbed and sanded when wet. Old people objected to painted floors because they were slippery, but the housewives were quite proud when they had one done in "spatter work," or with swirls of the brush. "Pumpkin yellow" was a common floor color. Rag carpets began to be woven about 1814 and there were braided and hooked rugs. Some carpets were made of square pieces of heavy cloth sewed together and ornamented with various sewed on patterns of differently colored cloth.

The cast iron kitchen stove was introduced about 1820 and came from Stafford, Connecticut, and ushered in the era of saleratus biscuit and fried beefsteak. Potatoes began to appear about 1733, but were scarce for sixty years. The common dinner for the farmer consisted of boiled beef or pork, with cabbage or turnips. The Sunday dinner of rye and Indian bread and baked beans was done to perfection on Saturday in the big oven and left there to keep warm while the people went to church.

After the saddle and the pillion the ox cart or the two-horse farm wagon furnished transportation, with common high-backed chairs or



a "double chair" put in for the passengers. Nathaniel Charles had the first four-wheeled one-horse wagon in town. The seat was mounted on a long wooden spring bolted at the back end of the wagon. Squire Pyncheon was so much pleased with it that instead of going to Boston on horseback, as he usually did, he hired the owner to take him in the new wagon. Later followed the chaise and the top-buggy, the buckboard and the carryall.

At the first town meeting in Brimfield it was voted to build a pound and several were constructed in subsequent years. Mr. Noah Hitchcock built one of stone, forty feet square, in 1762, but the town refused to pay for "what Mr. Hitchcock calls a pound." Twelve years later he still had the matter on his mind for he presented his bill with interest added.

Blazed trees marked the early bridle paths, which usually followed the line of least resistance. Highways, when they were laid out, were often indefinite in location, as follows: "across the land of Joshua Shaw where there is the best going," "leading from a big rock in the line of said Joshua's plain lot to a black oak staddle over a squeachy place." Alterations were frequent and troublesome. A petition for changing the road at the foot of Danielson Hill, "because of the untollerableness of Travailing there," was granted, reconsidered, allowed, neglected, discontinued, renewed, set aside and granted again. Working out the highway tax became, like doing military duty, an occasion for jollity rather than for fatiguing toil. A pail of cider was expected from every house when the oxen with sled and plough attached "broke out" the road in winter.

The mail was at first brought to Brimfield once a week from Brookfield. Charges varied up to thirty-seven and one-half cents for letters. When weekly newspapers came to be thought necessary, a special messenger was hired to bring them from Warren, where the stagecoach left them on its way to Springfield. Stages from Providence to Springfield and Worcester to Hartford ran through the village by 1832, sometimes as many as eleven in a day.

What is now the park was originally land laid out for the Springfield Road, six rods wide, and was the parade ground of the militia. When the first meetinghouse was torn down the trees on the common were sold for \$10, and it remained an unsightly place for many years until a park association was formed to fence and improve it.

Brimfield has always manifested an interest in the burying ground which was laid out in 1720. It was cleared and fenced by subscription and later a suitable stone wall was built around it. At first the caretaker had for pay what grazing it afforded, but in 1806 it was voted that no cattle should be allowed to graze in the cemetery. A hearse was first purchased in 1804.

An epitaph on a stone in the burying yard at Brimfield reads: "This is erected as a faint expression of filial respect and to mark the spot where repose the remains of Gen. Wm Eaton, who died June 1, 1811, *Æ.* 47." He seems to be so little known at the present time that it is a surprise to learn of the gift of 10,000 acres of land which he received from the State of Massachusetts in token of the respect in which his talents and services were held by that State.

William Eaton was born in Woodstock, Connecticut, and at a very early period he showed strong indications of intellectual vigor. At the age of sixteen, without the knowledge or consent of his parents, he went from home and enlisted in the army. This was in 1780, near the close of the Revolutionary War. He attained the rank of sergeant and after peace was declared commenced the study of Latin. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1790, having been obliged to delay his studies and earn money by teaching school.

While teaching in Windsor, Vermont, in 1791, he was chosen clerk of the House of Delegates and the next year was appointed a captain in the United States Army. After serving in various places on the southern and western frontiers for five years, he was appointed consul to Tunis, where he discharged his duties with great firmness and ability. His most famous enterprise was the restoration to his province of the ex-bashaw of Tripoli, a bold and hazardous undertaking. After that General Eaton returned to his native country and was everywhere received with the most distinguished applause. The King of Denmark presented him with an elegant acknowledgment in a gold box for services he rendered several captured Danes at Tunis.

A law in the Massachusetts Bay Colony read: "Every township, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty householders, shall appoint one to teach all children to write and read; and when any town shall increase to the number of a hundred families, they shall set up a grammar school." In Brimfield, at first, the school was kept in private houses and only one teacher was employed. He

went from one part of the town to another and spent a specified number of weeks in each of the three sections. In 1766 there were ten numbered school districts. John Sherman got the first schoolhouse built near the meetinghouse, sixteen feet wide and twenty feet long, with tables and benches and "glassed as much as necessary." All parts of the town were pleased because two other schoolhouses were voted at the same meeting in 1742, but it was many years before they were built. Each district was allowed to administer its own school, a system supposed to be productive of a greater interest in education, but which proved to be a source of wrangling and petty jealousies. The first schoolmaster's name on the records is David Hitchcock. Geography was unknown as a study until about 1800 and grammar was taught only in connection with Latin. Women were considered competent to teach summer schools, but winter schools were attended by the larger boys and for these it was necessary to have a teacher of the stronger sex. In 1766 the town paid a fine of thirty pounds for not maintaining a grammar school, but the fine was remitted the next year, when the selectmen sent a letter saying they thought they had complied with the law by engaging Timothy Danielson to teach at his house all scholars that might apply for grammar school instruction.

The minister had charge of the examination of the teachers until after 1819, when a committee of ten was appointed to assist him in that and the care of the schools. The visits of some of the committee caused much merriment to the children when they saw the books held upside down in the visitors' trepidation. At first the annual school reports were presented in manuscript and read at town meeting by the chairman of the committee, but in 1859 they were printed for the first time.

A hundred years ago six or ten Hitchcocks or Lumbards or Janeses would go to school from a single family. The tap of the ferule on the window was the signal for school to begin. Caps, bonnets and shawls were hung in the entry and dinner pails stowed safely away. When entering or leaving the room, or "toeing the mark" for recitation, the children "made their manners." When recess came there was a rush for the door. Boys did then very much as boys do now.

"Like sportive deer they coursed about and shouted as they ran,  
Turning to mirth all things of earth as only boyhood can."



To lock out a teacher and force a fight with him was a chief delight. Fuel was at first furnished by the families that sent children, in proportion to the number sent, and boys took their turns at the chopping block. Money was made to go farther by the common custom of hiring a teacher who would "board round."

The support of the poor was, under the legislation of the early colonial times, made a charge on the town. Thriftlessness was discouraged, but the poor were treated with consideration. The relatives of old Doctor Green were paid a sum of money yearly to help take care of him and that was not an unusual proceeding. Just after the close of the Revolution, when the burden of pauper support was increasing fast, a stranger coming into town was liable to be warned off by the constable.

In early times all the male citizens from sixteen to sixty years were enrolled in the militia. They were required to drill four days each year besides the annual muster. But training day, with its increasing prevalence of drunkenness, came to be obnoxious and disgraceful. The ununiformed militia were called "floodwood" and "barnyard cadets." They appeared fantastic when they gathered for a May training at Ephraim Fenton's. One man had a codfish bone trimmed with onions for a plume and another wore the clothes of the biggest man in town stuffed with hay. Brimfield parade ground was a favorite field for regimental musters. The men appeared in "pepper and salt," "butternut brown" or spruce blue coats with brass buttons, side by side with well worn garments of uncertain color. Hats varied in size, shape and material. The corporal had a brass eagle with a red feather tied on his stovepipe hat. The captains had glittering swords, red sashes and waving plumes. When the command was given, "Shoulder arms!" some laid hold of one part of the gun, some another. Usually only the fife and drum furnished the martial music, but occasionally someone could play the bugle and then the captain's knees almost touched his chin as he stepped proudly along. If on the march to some other town a toll gate keeper demurred at giving free passage the captain had but to say, "Men, do your duty," and four would step forward to lift the gate bodily from its hinges.

No more marked change in social habits can be mentioned than the change in drinking usages. Charges of bushels of malt are found in old account books and seven to ten bushels constituted the ordinary

supply of a family for a year. An old malthouse stood near the brook opposite the Hitchcock School. Previous to the Revolution cider and beer were the common beverages, but army life induced habits of dissipation and the erection of distilleries made cider brandy an article abundantly supplied. The notion prevailed that alcoholic beverages were needed to retain full physical strength, and mowers in the hay field, ministers in their association meetings and attendants at funerals were all well provided. Men drank up their farms, spending for liquor more than they could earn. Westward of the store on the corner might be seen every spring a double row of barrels, showing how large a quantity of liquor was sold every winter. Public attention was at length aroused to the alarming prevalence of drunkenness and the American Temperance Society was organized in 1826.

Great changes have taken place in the industrial and agricultural life of the community. Iron ploughs were frowned on at first for fear they would poison the soil and then because they would not be durable. Cyril Brown, who had his first one in 1818, was fearful he had really made a mistake when he found a crack in his, but Eaton Hitchcock, the blacksmith who had made it, assured him it was only an imperfection in the rough bog iron. Calves were formerly weaned, onion seed sown and pork killed during the increase of the moon, but flaxseed must be sowed when it was waning. For five years the General Court offered special bounties for raising flax. The silk worm mania swept the region about 1840. Every woman expected to wear silk, for the farmers bought the cuttings and set out mulberry trees in great numbers. Silk worms were raised and large prizes offered for their product at local fairs, but the whole enterprise came to grief. The Brimfield Cheese Factory took over one of the tasks of the housewife in 1870 and for a while was quite successful.

Pottery was once made in Brimfield from clay dug out of Sherman's Pond. Bricks were made in various places and one man made earthen milk pans. The hatter and the tailor were busy in Brimfield as in other country towns, one shop employing a number of girls to sew. "Clothing works" were built along the small brooks and furnished the dressed cloth for the tailor. Machine-cut nails were made in town by Thomas Morgan, who perfected the machine which both cut and headed them. When it took three years to make a hide into a piece of good leather, tanneries were established in several places in

the town. The first ready-made boots offered for sale in Hartford were made by P. Warren and Son in Brimfield, who finally came to have a large business and employed two hundred and fifty people in neighboring towns.

In early times the well-to-do families prepared for winter not only by having a seamstress in to get the clothing ready, but the shoemaker also came to the house for a week or more. This traveling about from house to house was called "whipping the cat." The length of the boy's or girl's bare foot was measured on the floor and that was the only measurement taken. The bottoming and finishing of pegged boots and shoes was carried on by many a resident of the town a little later. Saddlers and harnessmakers were kindred workers and wheelwrights and carriagemakers followed as roads improved.

When the Brimfield stage line—east and west—had for almost threescore years carried the United States mails, and furnished accommodation for passengers to and from the town, it was discontinued. This was in September, 1907, and it marked the close of an age which this line had prolonged far into the modern era.

The great post route from Boston to Albany lay north of Brimfield and at first the mail was carried to the town by messengers from that route. In 1797 the mail left Boston three times a week, arriving at Worcester in the morning at 3 A. M. and at Brookfield the second day at 10 A. M. and Springfield at 2 P. M. Besides, it is likely there was connection at times with this post route and Stafford, for the mineral waters there attracted travelers from Boston.

During several years the Citizens' Line of coaches plied between Hartford and Worcester. As many as eleven coaches were counted daily at one period of its existence, but the Springfield and Providence Line opened in 1823, was maintained a much longer time, and was far more important in stagecoach history. Fine coaches drawn by four and sometimes by six horses passed over the roads. From Springfield the course was to North Wilbraham and Monson and then by a roundabout route to Brimfield and to Abner Nicholls' mill in the valley. Next it pursued a rugged incline to the old wooden schoolhouse and from there went up "Long Hill." On either side of the schoolhouse the stage route was through a wild region of hills and ravines flanking a broken mountainside.

Without doubt a number of stage routes lay through Brimfield in early times of which all knowledge has vanished, leaving behind only



a vague hint. In some places they have become sections of present highways; elsewhere they may be found as discarded and overgrown roads or as useful cart paths. Out of the dimness of supposition concerning Brimfield's earliest stage routes there is the well-established tradition of a remarkable location over the ridge of the mountain west of the "Hollow." In the ledge on the crest of the mountain, 1,000 feet above sea level, are grooves in the solid rock which people have had pointed out to them in childhood by their parents as having been made many years before by the wheels of stagecoaches going from Boston to Hartford. Measurements have shown these grooves to correspond in distance apart with the width of the road which can be traced beyond and the wearing into the rock was caused by the custom of chaining the wheels together in the absence of brakes, with the result that a chiseling process was produced by the sliding wheels.

The passing on the country highways of the loaded coaches was a great source of entertainment to the wayside dwellers. A bugle would be blown by the driver as the coach approached a village to announce that it was nearing a hotel, so that a relay of horses would be made ready and the onward passage delayed as little as possible. The bugle was played with great skill by some of the drivers and its notes were especially effective on a still morning, at first faintly heard in the distance and growing louder and clearer as the stage rolled grandly in. A large number of horses were kept at the Brimfield Hotel for relays. If a coach arrived about noon the driver and passengers would dine at the hotel, while the horses were fed. Drivers took pride in the appearance of their horses as well as in feats of rein-handling and the turning of curves. A driver between Springfield and Providence, who prided himself on his skill as a reinsman, would come in with every horse on the jump and cut a marvelous circle in the hotel square. Another distinguished driver spent an hour daily in grooming each horse so its coat would not soil a white silk handkerchief.

The great development of stagecoach travel in the second quarter of the last century was caused by the evolution of machinery and the establishing of manufactories. Also, near the middle of the century by the building of railroads, which called for connecting routes across country. Most of the passengers who filled the coaches and who wore the tall beaver hats, making the load on top so imposing, were

business men going as rapidly as this method of travel would permit from one manufacturing town to another, or to leading commercial centers such as Boston and New York.

The fact that waterpower had been so largely developed in the region between Brimfield and Providence gave special importance to the Springfield and Providence stage line and it seems to have been the chief reliance for mail transportation for at least twenty years.

The first Brimfield postmaster was "Squire" Stephen Pyncheon and the post-office was kept at his house; for a good many years a box two feet square was large enough to hold all the mail. The second postmaster was appointed in February, 1823, and the office was kept in the hall of his house. Very little space at the foot of the stairs was needed for the purpose, the bulk of the mail was so small, and thus it continued to be during all the earlier periods. But the importance of letters forming the only and infrequent connection between friends enduring the separation not only of distance, but difficulty of travel and communication, cannot be realized. The contents of the mail bags differed from those of the present time in appearance, as well as quantity. Letters were written on letter-size sheets of paper, which were folded and sealed and sent without envelopes or stamps, and the amount of postage was marked in the righthand upper corner. Rates for postage were according to distance for single letters, and the rates were double for double letters. They were an expensive joy at the lowest and were not to be lightly dispatched.

The charges, however, were more often paid by those who received them than by the senders, and people were allowed to keep an open account with the postmaster. An account at Brimfield shows a bill of a year's standing. A record in 1835 shows charges of six cents, ten cents, twelve and one-half cents, eighteen and three-fourths cents and twenty-five cents for one letter. For two letters there were charges of sixteen cents, twenty cents, twenty-eight and three-fourths cents, forty-seven and one-half cents. Both weight and distance seem to have been calculated in the charges. One cent was charged for a paper.

In bringing this drama of the highways to an end, I have chosen to dwell on the charm of the Long Hill Road, which winding for a mile, climbed the ascent of the rough mountainside from the Quaboag valley to the level of the Brimfield plateau, and was a distinctive fea-

ture of the route between Palmer and Brimfield. A long mile the ascent seemed, but going down was speedy and sometimes exciting; yet in spite of the absence of brakes in the earlier years, and the fact that drivers were in the habit of taking loads of twenty passengers at full speed down the hill, no accident ever occurred. The only approach to catastrophe was when the load was light and a lone passenger suffered violent contacts of Sunday bonnet or beaver hat with the roof of the stage, as the vehicle bounded over the "thank-you-ma'ams" or water bars with which the road was generously provided. The driver, while duly conscious of his responsibility for life and limb, scorned to consider the danger of injured headgear or wounded pride, even if he did not sometimes take a little wicked pleasure in exercising his command of the situation.

There was real peril in winter on a section of the first "old road" between the schoolhouse and another building when there was ice under foot. Then the heavily loaded coach descending the ice-coated road was in danger of sliding into the ravine below. At such times a pair of oxen was kept in readiness to be hitched by the yoke to the hind axle of the coach, while the owner of the oxen by a dexterous wielding of his whip would skillfully manage this curious combination of brake and rudder until the descent was safely accomplished. A morning ride in summer down the Long Hill gave whoever had gained the coveted top seat a glorious exaltation. The scenery was at first picturesque and then grand.

To begin with, the traveler looked down on either hand into deep ravines with their rushing brooklets bordered by the tangle of the wildwood. Farther on there opened to view a noble panorama of lofty hills raising their forest-clad cones against the western sky. The exhilaration of motion through the morning air, the sense of sharing in Nature's renewal, gave a new infusion of the joy of living, while the world seemed freshly created.

When the Boston and Albany Railroad was built the Brimfield people are said to have opposed it because the use of steam would lessen the value of horses and the price of oats, but in 1872 the town subscribed \$25,000, hoping to secure railroad connections with Palmer through the Hartford and Erie Railroad Company.

At the annual town meeting, in 1854, Samuel A. Hitchcock, a retired native of the town, made a proposition to establish a free



high school, but it wasn't accepted, and the next year he offered to give \$10,000 as a permanent fund, provided individuals would subscribe \$4,000 toward the purchase of land and erection of a building. The money was over-subscribed and in subsequent years Mr. Hitchcock gave other large sums. The name at first was the "Brimfield Free Grammar School," but later was changed to the "Hitchcock Free High School."

The Olympus Club was started about 1857 for the purpose of cleaning the sidewalk of snow during the winter season. The same year saw the organization of the Brimfield Thief Detective Society for the protection of its members. It had a board of directors and a "pursuing committee."

About 1820 the Brimfield Literary Association possessed quite a collection of books, but they became weary of the care of them and they were sold at auction. The town now has a beautiful library building of field stone, called the Danielson-Lincoln Memorial. It was given by James D. Lincoln, a jewelry manufacturer of Wrentham, in memory of his mother, Sarah E. Danielson, and of his wife, Eliza F. M. Lincoln. Mr. Lincoln was a native of Brimfield, but left town when a boy of ten and his mother died when he was so young that he could not remember her. The Danielson family held the thirtyninth grant of land in the town and the library is built on the home lot, literally in the orchard. Sarah Danielson, who afterward married a country doctor, was a great social favorite when she lived in Washington, and two admirers are said to have fought a duel over the privilege of dancing with her. The library building was designed by Professor Arthur Houghton, chairman of design in the University of Manitoba. A feature of the interior is an ample and hospitable fireplace, "the hearthstone of the village." The flagstone path to the door was the gift of Mary Knight Hyde, of Warren.

For about thirty years after its dedication in June, 1904, the library had an unusual librarian in Miss Mary Anna Tarbell, a native of the village, and one who loved its history and its people. She was not satisfied simply to deal out books, but interested herself in the whole life of the town. Exhibits of grapes and apples were held in the library and she availed herself of traveling art collections. The famous Steerage Rock of Brimfield is appropriately used on the library book plate.

An interesting feature in Brimfield not found in other towns is a burying ground for horses, surrounded by a stone wall built in the shape of a horseshoe. Here James A. Hoyt has buried some of his faithful friends who served him well for many years. Daisy and Jerry were both over thirty-two years of age when they passed on and had enjoyed a few years of good pasturage after many spent in the lumber business.





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*Chester, With Its Emery Mines*

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## CHAPTER VII

### *Chester, With Its Emery Mines*

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The town of Chester is located in the extreme northwest corner of Hampden County and Blandford on the south is the only town in this county which it touches. The other bordering towns are in Berkshire and Hampshire counties. Chester was originally called Murrayfield and included Huntington and nearly half of Montgomery and the southeast corner of Middlefield. Murrayfield was No. 9 of the ten townships sold at auction by order of the General Court in June, 1762. It was estimated to contain about 32,000 acres of land. In 1736 a grant of 4,800 acres had been made to David Ingersoll, of Westfield, in exchange for lands in Berkshire County which were wanted for the colony planned for the Stockbridge Indians. For the same purpose Joseph Green and Isaac Walker, of Boston, had traded their holdings in Berkshire County and received 2,000 acres in the east part of the township. About the same time Rev. Stephen Williams, of Springfield, petitioned the General Court that the heirs of his father, Rev. John Williams, of Deerfield, might receive some land in recompense for the expense his father had been put to in entertaining Indians from Canada. He received seven hundred acres out of No. 9, in the portion now the town of Huntington. There were a few other grants of similar sort, but the most complicating thing to the proprietors who purchased the big tract was the fact that nineteen settlers with their families had already taken possession of various areas, erected their dwellings and cultivated land. Some of them had been there for two years at least.

In the fall of 1762 the proprietors, John Chandler, of Worcester; John Murray, of Rutland; Timothy Paine, of Worcester; and Abijah Willard, of Lancaster, employed two surveyors from Westfield to lay out their holdings. They surveyed one hundred and twenty lots of one hundred and eight acres each in the center of the township,



which is now known as Chester Center. No roads were surveyed or laid out, but an allowance for roads was made by adding two acres and eighty rods to each one hundred-acre lot. At a meeting of the proprietors held at the inn of William Lyman in Northampton, January 5, 1763, fifty-one men drew lots and were admitted as settlers on condition that each one within the space of three years should build a dwelling house, twenty-four by eighteen by seven feet, and have seven acres of land cleared and fenced. They must also within three years settle a "Protestant minister of the Gospel." Only thirteen of the nineteen settlers who had taken up land before the proprietors took possession were allowed to draw lots, and of these only seven were permitted their one hundred acres where they had already made their homes. The remaining six were neither permitted to draw lots nor keep the lands they had already worked on, but three of them remained and purchased farms. The other three left the region. No reason is given in the records why these nineteen were not all treated alike.

It appears to have been the policy of the proprietors to so locate the settlers as to secure the settlement and cultivation of lots in all parts of this first division. Settlements had already been begun on the Ingersoll tract, which lay nearer Westfield. The early arrivals were many of them adventurers seeking cheap land and most of them were poor. Some Scotch came from Blandford and from Pelham, and a few men were from Rutland, Lancaster and places in Connecticut. Stephen and Timothy Lyman, of Northampton, packed their worldly effects into a chest, and carrying it between them, one hand grasping a handle of the chest and the other an ax, made their way on foot to the highlands of No. 9. John Smith, another settler, also from Northampton, was said to have been a man of extraordinary strength and physical endurance. He carried a five-pail iron kettle on his back all the way to his new home.

The first houses built by the settlers were rudely constructed. A huge stone chimney went up through the center of the house with a spacious fireplace in each of the principal rooms. These were plentifully supplied with wood in cold weather, but even then often it was only with the aid of screens and high-backed settles that the inmates of these houses could keep themselves comfortable while hovering around the blazing fire. Few of the houses at first had glass windows. The doors were large and heavy, hung on wooden hinges and were

fastened with great wooden latches, which were lifted from the outside by pulling a string called the latchstring. This passed through a small hole in the door, just above the latch, and at night the door was made secure by drawing in the latchstring. To say "You will find the latchstring out" was an invitation to come and an assurance of welcome. Tallow candles were a luxury and a lighted pine knot served well for a torch to go about at night. The preservation of the household fire was a matter of great concern. To lose it involved a journey to the nearest neighbor to borrow live coals and the nearest neighbor might be half a mile or more away. It is said that one of the early settlers brought the household fire with him when he came with his family, carefully preserving it during a journey occupying several days.

Furniture was rude and homemade, and kitchen utensils few. Clocks were rare and people learned to judge time by observation. A noon mark cut on the door or window sill served like a sun dial in fair weather. Twenty-five years after the settlement of the town, Pearly Cook, a young unmarried man, came alone into the region to make his home. He built a rude house and lived like a frontiersman. Neither pails nor pans were to be had, so he cut the butt of a tree into short blocks, which he hollowed out into troughs for milk pail and pans. He finally succeeded in getting a large iron spoon with which he skimmed his "pans" of milk and stirred the cream into butter.

A minister lot of one hundred acres was laid out by the first surveyors and eight acres for "a meeting-house place, training field and burying place." This was where is now Chester Center and the meetinghouse was erected in 1767. It was forty-five feet long, forty feet wide and the posts were twenty feet high. The frame was set up and boarded and shingled and the doors hung by the proprietors according to agreement, but several years passed before the inhabitants were able to complete the structure. In cold weather preaching, as well as town meeting, was often conducted in a tavern or private home. A schoolhouse was set on this land in 1783.

The front door of the meetinghouse was on the north and there were smaller doors on the east and west. Each of the proprietors reserved pew space for himself. John Murray's was seven feet long by six feet wide and was at the right of the front door, while Timothy Paine's, of the same dimensions, was on the left. John Chandler's

was eight feet long and six wide and was located at the right of the east door, and Abijah Willard's, of the same size, was built opposite. The windows were put in one at a time, as the town could afford it, and were boarded up during the winter.

The proprietors sent a petition to the General Court, in 1763, telling of their dissatisfaction with their grant because of its being so mountainous and "divided into three parts by three very rapid, rocky rivers, the banks of which rivers are so steep and rocky that it is almost impossible to pass from one side of said rivers to the other"; and that they must necessarily expend great sums of money in making roads over mountains and building expensive bridges over the three rapid rivers. They asked that either a part of the sum paid by them be refunded or they be given another grant near their township. This latter plea was granted, but the proprietors never built the roads or bridges and the settlers, in 1779, sent a petition of their own to the General Court. By this time Chandler, Murray and Willard had left the country as Tories and had been forbidden to return, so on Timothy Paine came the burden according to the decision of the court and several lots belonging to him were sold to pay for building a bridge.

The proprietors had called the town in No. 9 Murrayfield and under that name it was incorporated October 31, 1765. But another town in Hampshire County was called Myrifiel, afterward Rowe, and on account of the confusing of the two, as early as 1775 there was some talk of changing the name of Murrayfield. One town meeting voted to change to Mount Asaph, and another decided Mountfair was preferable. Still later Fairfield was the choice of the town, but the General Court gave it the name of Chester.

The first sawmill in town was built by John Chandler in 1764 at his own expense as the proprietors had failed in living up to their duty of establishing one. It was south of the meetinghouse on Nooney Brook. About 1765 a gristmill was built on the left bank of the Middle Branch. This was under the auspices of the proprietors and was probably the first gristmill in the town. The first vote of the incorporated town with regard to schools was taken in 1769, when it was voted not to raise any money for schools that year. But the town was not as indifferent to education as it sounded for they soon voted four pounds for schools, to which they added eight pounds the same year. When the town pound was built in 1774 it cost as much, twelve



pounds, as was voted for schools that year. Another interesting vote gave a bounty of twelve shillings for wolves' heads. At this time no person was qualified to vote in town affairs unless taxed for £20 or more. There were seventy-six polls, but only forty-nine qualified voters.

The subject oftenest before the town in the early days had to do with the meetinghouse or with the preaching. The settlers were spread over a large territory without good connecting roads or bridges and it was a hardship for many of them to go up to the old Center, in some cases eight miles, in all weathers. So at various times other places were selected for holding Sabbath worship, a favorite one being Isaac Mixer's Tavern on the east side of the stream north of what is now known as Norwich Bridge. For a while they met three Sabbaths out of seven at the dwelling house of Israel Rose and for a time one-half of the preaching was to be at Ebenezer Webber's barn. Finally, discussion became so warm over the choosing of places to meet that Captain Nathan Leonard, of Worthington; Lieutenant Nathaniel Kingsley, of Becket; and Deacon Benjamin Tupper, of Chesterfield, were called in to decide and they settled the matter for three years by appointing the services two out of three Sabbaths at the meeting-house and the third at Mixer's.

Reverend Aaron Bascom was ordained and settled as minister on December 20, 1768. He received a settlement of £70 and a salary of £40 a year, which was to be increased yearly by £5 until it reached £60. Firewood was later added by his request. His ordination was accompanied by the usual feasting and drinking as evidenced by bills brought in to the town for keeping people and horses, and for men and wine. James Hamilton received the sum of eight shillings for going to Brookfield and Weston after ministers. The towns were required by law to support preaching, but it was often difficult to harmonize the various ideas and beliefs in one unit. The Scotch element in town was quite large and they would naturally prefer the Presbyterian form of church government, while the English leaned toward the Congregational. Compromises were effected and an agreement containing fifteen articles was drawn up "under a solemn sense of the importance of peace and union among churches."

Church discipline was strong from the first. A scandalous report that Jonathan Wait and his wife had taken undue toll at their grist-

mill had to be investigated. Caleb Bascom was dealt with for the excessive use of intoxicating liquor. Abraham Flemming was summoned before the pastor and elders for fighting, and on confessing his fault he was forgiven. Timothy Smith was complained of by his brother for "profane swearing." Timothy refused to acknowledge his fault and was excommunicated, but afterward his heart softened, or the odium was too much to bear, and he repented and was taken back into the fold.

When James Holland settled in Murrayfield he built his house on an elevation a little way east of the Middlefield Road. Some disturbance of the elements unroofed the dwelling soon after its completion. Surveying the ruins after the gale subsided he remarked to his young sons: "We will move the house down the hill into the brush out of the range of the wind." For James Holland to resolve to do a thing was to do it; and the house, with the simplest and rudest mechanical appliances, was gently moved, with no assistance other than that of his boys, down the slope to a sheltered nook, where the violent winds no longer annoyed and vexed him.

James Holland was a Presbyterian, but when an itinerant preacher named Thrasher came to supply the wants of the followers of John Wesley, Holland was urged to attend one of the services and at last he complied. In the course of his sermon Thrasher exclaimed: "You miserable, rebellious sinners, unless you repent God will shake you over hell as a dog would shake a woodchuck." To the orthodox, devout mind of James Holland, this illustration seemed coarse, vulgar and utterly lacking in that reverence which is due the deity. Quickly uprose this descendant of the reformers of Scotland and sternly said: "Thrasher, you have said too much! Sit down. If you don't sit down I will sit you down." The significant gesture that accompanied these words indicated to Thrasher that he had better obey and he sat down and the exercises of that meeting were abruptly brought to a close.

Isabella Walker Quigley, the wife of James Quigley, carried heroic blood in her veins. Her father was the near kinsman of George Walker, the famous defender of Londonderry, in the war between James II and his son-in-law, William, Prince of Orange. In colonial times the Walker family received considerable grants of land in the District of Maine on the southwest side of Penobscot Bay, and

while Isabella was still a young girl, her brother, in company with several associates, commenced a settlement on these lands. The times were perilous and the location was a dangerous one, as there was an almost constant state of hostility between the inhabitants of New England and the French in Canada. To insure the safety of these pioneers in the wilderness a blockhouse was erected.

On a certain occasion, during the French and Indian War, indications not to be disregarded were observed that hostile Indians, intent upon mischief, were lurking in the woods, waiting for a favorable opportunity to make a descent upon the settlement. Being obliged to procure forage for their cattle at some distance, the few men left in the morning, giving strict injunctions to the women, in case of the appearance of savages, to retire within the fortress and give the alarm which had been previously agreed upon. Nothing occurred to excite the attention of the women until late in the afternoon, when their suspicions were aroused by the appearance on a near hillock of an evergreen bush, which they had not previously noticed. Presently it approached nearer and similar bushes also made appearance. Clearly something was wrong. The blockhouse was immediately barricaded and the alarm given and preparations were instantly made to give the redskins a warm reception. It so happened that one of the women had been boiling soft soap in a large caldron at the blockhouse, and now, while scalding hot, rye flour was added to the liquid to render it adhesive. The blockhouse was so constructed that the second story projected several feet over the lower one and was pierced at intervals with port holes for the purpose of dislodging any enemy who should be able to reach the side of the building. To this second story the mixture of soap and rye flour was instantly conveyed. With a ladle in her hand the courageous girl Isabella, just entering her teens, took her station by the port holes and awaited the assault of the foe. At the same moment the savages threw aside the bushes that had concealed them and made a rush for the blockhouse. In the dim twilight Isabella poured ladleful after ladleful of the seething, bubbling mixture of soap and rye flour through the portholes upon the upturned faces and half naked bodies of the savages. Wherever it touched it stuck. With terrific yells and shrieks they started for the woods and were seen no more. Years afterwards, upon the peaceful heights of Chester Center, Isabella Walker Quigley would narrate this and other



adventures among the Indians in the wilds of Maine to a group of interested and delighted grandchildren.

Alexander Gordon married the sister of James Holland and lived on what is known as Gordon Hill. His son, John Gordon, was one of the brightest young men ever raised in Chester. A career which promised to be one of great usefulness and even brilliancy was cut short by death just as he attained to manhood. While still a youth John Gordon went to the Den, two or three miles distant, to assist a neighbor in slaughtering some swine. It was in the short days of December and it was twilight before the work was completed. Fastening some of the meat to his saddle he prepared to return home. Before mounting his horse, as a matter of precaution, he took a blazing brand, three or four feet in length, from the fireplace. He had proceeded but a short distance when his horse manifested symptoms of uneasiness and presently his ears were saluted by the ominous baying of a pack of wolves that had been attracted by the scent of the meat. The wolves were upon him a minute later and for two miles it became a race for life. The trusty horse knew the enemy he had to contend with and put forth all his powers. Gordon dropped the reins upon the neck of the horse, grasped the blazing brand with both hands and met the assault of the hungry and ferocious brutes. The pack divided, about half on each side. The wolves would spring forward to fasten upon the horse's flank, to be met by the blazing firebrand which Gordon thrust in their faces. Then they would recoil for an instant, preparatory for another rush. On either side it was alternately the recoil and the rush. It was a fearful and terrific ride—the horse exerting every ounce of strength in a steady gallop to reach his home, and John Gordon waving the brand of living fire, swaying from side to side to meet the onset of the foe. Home was at last reached in safety. But the wolves followed him to the very door of the dwelling.

During the whole period of his life there was no more prominent citizen of Chester than Samuel Bell. He came to the town among the very first of the settlers, cleared land, built houses and barns, and for the times and locality, achieved an enviable measure of prosperity. While clearing his land, which was situated about one mile west of James Holland's place, he would labor until late in the evening, then, taking a firebrand in his hand as a protection against the attacks of the

wolves, would pick his way with some difficulty through the forest, guided only by blazed trees, to the home of Mr. Holland, who was his brother-in-law. One day in midwinter, in company with a settler who had located in his neighborhood, he started on a hunting expedition. Presently the sun disappeared, a blinding snowstorm set in, and the two hunters became bewildered and lost. To add to their perplexities, the obscurity of night closed upon them. It was found impossible to kindle a fire and to proceed in the darkness would be a useless waste of strength. Observing that his companion was becoming stupified by the intense cold, Mr. Bell, after concealing the guns, cut a stout birch rod and laid it smartly over his friend's back and legs. This irritated him and he started in pursuit of Mr. Bell, who led him in a circle until he became warm and good-natured. This was repeated at intervals during the long, cold winter night and was the means by which their lives were preserved. When the sun rose clear and bright in the morning they found that they had passed the night on the banks of the west branch of the Westfield River, about midway between the present villages of Chester and Huntington.

When the three-year agreement about the place of holding preaching services was over, the town, which had been growing stronger in the region of Chester Center, refused to renew it and this led to an appeal to the General Court for a division of the town. John Kirkland was a leading man in the eastern part and aided by Timothy Smith he pushed the matter forward until the District of Norwich was incorporated June 29, 1773. It took a number of town meetings before all affairs of the daughter town were properly separated from the mother. Lines had to be shifted because people living near the border had a preference one way or another. Norwich wanted her share of the seals and measures and got them, but Murrayfield eventually decided she had given up enough, for a committee of adjustment was instructed to use its influence "to hinder the town of Norwich from obtaining one inch more than the line already fixed."

The northwest part of the township was annexed to Middlefield in 1779 by desire of the inhabitants in that vicinity, but by vote of the General Court against the vote of the town.

Like many other country towns Murrayfield suffered from the scourge of smallpox and yet was slow to take up inoculation. Cap-

tain Shepard was given permission in 1778 to have his family inoculated in his own house "if he will give good obligations for his good behavior" and he was allowed to let in others of the town as long as the first day of May, and no longer, "if there is room for them." Another vote said that any person "may have smallpox by inoculation in the fall at proper places as the town shall judge best." For a time inoculation met with bitter opposition based upon all sorts of grounds, moral, religious and political.

At a town meeting held June 17, 1776, the citizens of Murrayfield voted "that it is the mind of this town that the Continental Congress declare independence from Great Britain, to a man, at a full meeting." This was not their first interest in the coming struggle as the militia had been drilling and the town had voted two years before not to "purchase, buy, or consume any goods or wares that shall be imported from Great Britain." During the war soldiers were sent to various campaigns, money was raised and clothing and food were furnished. In 1780 the town raised £5,000 to purchase beef for the army; another big sum was gathered in the next year, but finally at a town meeting in August, 1782, the town decided it had done all it could and refused. The people were patriotic enough, but poor. Abner Smith, the wealthiest man, who in 1776 was rated at £119 and 15 shillings, in 1781, though still the wealthiest man, had a rating of only £31 and 6 shillings.

Currency depreciated and prices went up, as the records show when, in 1778, soldiers' shirts were \$6, stockings \$4.50 and shoes 40 shillings. A year later a county committee was appointed to fix prices for the necessities of life and Timothy Lyman was Murrayfield's delegate to Northampton. The prices were decided on and then the town appointed a committee of three to see that they were adhered to.

The plotted center of Murrayfield was on a plain, 1,300 feet above sea level, and is known as Chester Center. Here was church and school, tavern and store and burying ground. The Boston and Albany stage route and freight routes went through this village and until the coming of the railroad, which diverted industry and travel, it was a thriving community. Another early village was Littleville on the Middle Branch, which grew up around the first gristmill, a sawmill and a tannery, which later manufactured twenty tons of sole leather annually. Littleville had its post-office, store and meetinghouse, which



was built by the Congregationalists and then taken over by the Baptists. Later it became known for its yearly agricultural fair.

North Chester, sometimes called Plunkettville for Thomas F. Plunkett, who manufactured cotton goods there, is on the Middle Branch about two and one-half miles out of Chester Center. Brown sheetings and slat curtains for windows were also made here and at one time forty people were employed. But the village is seven miles from a railroad and was at a disadvantage for that reason.

Dayville, a small hamlet which received its name from the Days, who ran a sawmill and made shoe pegs there, had also the less prosaic industry of manufacturing wintergreen essence.

Huntington was formerly known as Falley's Cross Roads and the post-office there bore that name as late as the 'forties. The Falleys came there in the latter part of the 1800's and kept an inn and a store. They also had a potash factory. It was an important center and also a source of trouble, as here met the corners of three towns, Chester, Blandford and Norwich. An effort was made in 1843 to form a new town here by adding portions of Montgomery and Russell and the battle went on for some years. Friends of the measure argued the difficulty of handling the schools and of administering justice. A Blandford constable attempting to serve a warrant would suddenly find his man in Chester, or if a delinquent desired to get out of the county he had only to go six or eight rods farther and step over the line into Norwich. Falley's Cross Roads, which was also sometimes called Chester Village in those days, prospered in spite of such difficulties. A hat factory was carried on for a time and cotton mills were erected.

Soon a meetinghouse was desired and in 1836 it was built by subscription with the decision to call it by the name of whichever denomination gave the most money, but to allow other sects to use it at certain times. The Methodists proved to be the most numerous, or the most prosperous, and controlled the church. Twelve years later the Congregationalists organized a society and built another church.

An abundance of beech timber in the vicinity attracted Melvin Copeland, of Hartford, to transfer his business of making planes to Chester Village. He brought ten or twelve of his skilled workmen with him and for several years did a prosperous business. The first floor of the old cotton factory was used by his brother, Alfred Cope-

land, who came from Columbus, Ohio, and established a wood-turning business and made bedsteads. Two Hannum brothers used part of the water privilege in making axes. On the second floor of the ax factory, doors, sash and blinds were made. Other industries were a wagon shop and a basket factory. There were also three general country stores started, a stove store, shoe store and a tailor's shop.

It was in 1853 that parts of Blandford and Chester were annexed to Norwich and, in 1855, when the name was changed from Norwich to Huntington, Falley's Cross Roads, or Old Chester Village, became a thing of the past.

The settlement now known as Chester, or Chester Village, was then called Chester Factories. It was not much settled until after the Revolutionary War. It received its name from the Chester Glass Company, incorporated in 1814. A large tanning business was carried on here for many years. The abundant waterpower attracted many other industries besides the sawmills so plentiful in the early years. Wooden pocket combs, bedsteads, bobbins, padlocks and cardboards were made. The hillsides were heavily wooded with maple, beech and birch, as well as the hemlock necessary for tanning. The railroad came to Chester Factories in 1841 and in order to make the next steep grade up to Washington extra engines were kept at Chester, which aided in the growth of this part of the town. The village is now a business center for parts of four surrounding towns.

To Dr. D. C. T. Jackson goes the credit of the discovery of emery in Chester, though Dr. Heman S. Lucas, who was interested in mineralogy, discovered the vein which contained it about 1850, but supposed it to be magnetic iron. The Hampden Emery Company was formed in 1868 and with various changes in ownership became a leading industry, sometimes producing over two hundred tons a year. The mines are not operated now, as corundum has partly replaced emery and because of water in the mines it was found more economical to get both corundum and emery ore shipped into the local plants.

The manufacture of grinding wheels has been the leading industry in Chester since 1870. At the Hamilton Emery and Corundum Company's plant twenty-five men are employed. The Cortland Grinding Wheels Corporation is another large concern, which employs sixty-five men.

The granite industry, formerly very prosperous, has experienced a decline. The Chester Granite Company, successors of the formerly widely known Chester Granite and Polishing Works, employs thirty-five men during their working season. The Chester Granite Quarries Company operates on the same seasonal basis with a slightly larger number of employees.

Chester's second Congregational church is located at Chester Factories and Methodist classes were organized as early as 1800. The Baptists came in later. A union church was built, but the accommodation became too small and the Methodists built a church for themselves in 1847. Some years later, at the time of an intense excitement on the subject of temperance, with a crusade against liquor sellers, this Methodist meetinghouse was blown up with powder in revenge for the part taken by some of its leading members. But the building was soon repaired and reopened.

A Catholic church was built in Chester in 1914, services having been held previously for some years in various halls. A new cult which has sprung up rather recently and has but few members is called Jehovah's Witnesses.

Dr. T. K. Dewolf, who came to Chester in 1832, was one of its outstanding men. He was a staunch Democrat, yet was a leading citizen in a strongly Republican town. He is still remembered for his generosity, rough capability in all kinds of sickness, and political leadership.

His son, DeWitt Clinton Dewolf, was a colorful figure in Massachusetts political history. He had a gift for oratory of the old-fashioned style and knew how to use ringing phrases and rounded periods. When he made his first political speech in the Walsh campaign at Pemberton Square in Boston, he held the crowd and drew cheers, though few knew who he was.

Mr. Dewolf was born at Chester Center on February 10, 1864, in the same house in which he died seventy-one years later. He was the son of a doctor, and at the age of fifteen went with a brother to Chicago and remained there for thirty-five years, largely devoted to the coal business. On his return to his old home in his native town he became interested in town politics and later in matters pertaining to the State. Mr. Dewolf was regarded as the original "Ely for Governor" man and took part in every political campaign from 1918



until his death. He was at one time executive secretary for Governor Joseph B. Ely and at the time of his death was State Commissioner of Labor and Industries. He was three times a delegate to the Democratic National Convention.

Commissioner Dewolf owned a long string of driving horses and for years drove a pair from Chester Hill to Huntington almost daily. There he would stable them and take a trolley car to Westfield. His old house and little law office with name over the door occupy a commanding site on Chester Hill.

Dr. H. S. Lucas, who came later to Chester as a general physician, had a keen interest in mineralogy. Failing in an attempt to smelt ore which he thought was magnetic iron, he was largely responsible for the development of the emery business in Chester. He traced the vein of Chester emery as far as Georgia, where he began manufacture of grinding wheels from the ore called corundum. When that business failed he returned to Chester, planning to live a life of comparative leisure as a lecturer for which he built the Lucas Museum, which still stands, but is now an apartment house. His large collection of minerals is in the library.

Chester's leading benefactor is Frank D. Hamilton, founder of the Hamilton Emery and Corundum Company. He built and endowed the Hamilton Memorial Library and established a scholarship fund to enable Chester students in continuing their education after high school.

Round Top, a hill in the southwestern part of Chester, reaches up to about 1,800 feet, and there are other elevations nearly as great. Between the hills run countless brooks which drain into the Westfield River and its branches. Sanderson Brook has the largest waterfall in the county. Recently the Civilian Conservation Corps has opened trails along the brook to both the lower and upper falls. The upper fall drops into a circular pool which, with the surrounding rocks and trees, makes one of the loveliest spots in Hampden County. "Brookside," a Young Woman's Christian Association camp, is beautifully situated in the western part of the town.

Chester has thirteen cemeteries, more than half of them being private ones belonging to one or two families. Northeast from Chester Center in a wooded pasture is an interesting tomb. Hiram Smith, a farmer of the region, did not take kindly to being buried in the

ground and, accordingly, had a cavity hewn in a huge boulder and arranged to have his sister and himself buried there. The rock is about ten feet high and thirty feet wide and a double aperture cut in one side is sealed up with slabs of the original stone on which are these inscriptions: "Hiram Smith, died 1873"; "Sarah Toogood, died 1869." Hiram left directions in his will that a road should always be kept open to his last resting place, but now it is a pleasant half mile walk from the highway.

The southern point of Gobble Mountain, just behind the village, gives a splendid view of Chester and the West Branch Valley. The slope and grove at the crest is park-like in appearance and includes a cave in the face of the cliff. A short distance from the crest are the ruins of one of the six abandoned emery mines in the township. Another is close to Austin Brook, a few hundred feet north of the Jacob's Ladder Highway. The largest mines are just south of the highway. The horizontal adits extend many hundred feet in the north slope of Round Top Hill, but are now dangerous to enter because of many cave-ins.

Two important and picturesquely named automobile routes pass through Chester. Jacob's Ladder, the most southern route, hardly merits the name since its grade has been eased and its curves have been straightened and widened. But you can still drink out of Jacob's Well on the way up and the view from the summit is very fine. The Skyline Trail goes through Chester Center toward Middlefield and is increasingly popular.





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*East Longmeadow, and the  
Brownstone Quarries*

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## CHAPTER VIII

### *East Longmeadow, and the Brownstone Quarries*

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East Longmeadow was a part of one of the oldest settlements in Massachusetts and yet is the youngest town in Hampden County. The town of Springfield, in which it was formerly included as part of the "Inward Commons," was incorporated in 1636. Longmeadow was set off from Springfield as a parish in 1713 and was raised to the dignity of a town in 1783. East Longmeadow was separated from Longmeadow and set apart as a town by itself through an Act of the State Legislature on May 19, 1894. The township covers thirteen square miles and has a population of 3,375 people. Its territory is more diversified than that of Longmeadow, hills of moderate elevation rising on the eastern side. Of these McCarthy's Hill on the road to Wilbraham is perhaps the most important. Billings Hill lies more southerly on the road to Somers, Connecticut.

The region is drained by several small streams. Watchaug Brook flows toward the south and a branch of Mill River flows toward the north, but eventually they both reach the Connecticut River, as does Pecowsic Brook, which rises near the center of the town and flows westerly. Another small stream crosses the State line into Connecticut and empties into Shaker Pond. Seven roads come together like the spokes of a wheel in the center of the town, a very unusual arrangement, but whether by chance or design, no record tells us.

Agriculture was the basis of the settlement of East Longmeadow and quarrying spread its fame abroad, but it has become a quiet residential district.

The town now known as East Longmeadow was originally an almost unbroken forest, infested with bears and wildcats, which were a serious annoyance to the early settlers. The region was also filled with deer, turkeys, pigeons and other wild game. Pastor Williams,



in his diary, alludes to the bear hunts which were organized to protect the cornfields in the clearings from the pilfering beast, and also to make more welcome the flocks of wild turkeys which used to emerge from the forest into the pastor's home-lot. The countless pigeons that thronged these woods induced the woodland owners to spread their nets and furnished them with cheap game in great abundance. So extensive and intricate was the forest that a wild hog imported from Smyrna, which escaped from his enclosure, gave an exciting chase of several days to a company of expert hunters.

Gradually daring pioneers penetrated the wilderness and located their homes. The first settlers from Longmeadow Street appear to have been Jonathan Burt and his brother Elijah and Silas Hale. This was about 1740, but the land had been apportioned to individuals sometime previous, when fear that Edmund Andros, Governor of New England, might sequester the commons, hastened the division.

The old church on Longmeadow Street remained for many years the place of worship for the people of the eastern part of the town and they faithfully made the tedious journey to services in all weathers.

In 1796 the inhabitants of the eastern part of the town of Longmeadow were given leave to erect a "horse house" fifty feet long on the north side of Meetinghouse Lane for the protection of their faithful steeds while they were listening to the preacher.

But in the southeastern corner of the town a different religious belief began to manifest itself and that section came to be known as "Baptist Settlement." These people for a long time worshipped with their Connecticut brethren in Enfield, traveling back and forth over what is appropriately called "Baptist Road." But in 1807 they petitioned the Baptist Church of that place and the Congregational Church of Longmeadow for permission to have "Elder George Atwell officiate with them as preacher of divinity one-half of the time." This petition was granted much to the joy and satisfaction of the people, but proved to be only a temporary measure. After holding services as a branch of the Enfield Church for a little over ten years, the First Baptist Church of East Longmeadow was established on June 23, 1818. The house of worship was built about 1830 in the southeastern corner of the town. Their early baptizing place was in a dammed up pond near the churchyard.

One of the old-time citizens of East Longmeadow, in recording his early impressions of the region, says:

"There was a large extent of woodland, poor roads, some stone wall and Virginia rail fence, but more of hedge fence, or piled up staddles and brush. The people were honest, industrious, capable, hospitable, obliging, and Sabbath-keeping. On a Sunday morning a long string of wagons would file into the highway leading to the old meetinghouse in the street; generally two-horse farm wagons with boards across for seats. There was one covered carriage and Deacon Burt had a chaise.

"Boys and girls went on foot and sometimes with their shoes in hand to be put on when they neared the meetinghouse.

"Elisha Dwight used to bring his family to meeting in an ox-cart and some others did likewise. In his old age he joined the Baptists, and one of his 'dislikes' came near preventing his profession of faith. When it came his turn to go into the water for baptism he seemed strangely reluctant. There he stood on the bank of the Scantic River, with his gaze fixed on the stream, shaking his staff in a mysterious way.

"He would not move. 'Come,' said Elder Atwell, in a persuasive tone. But the old man, still gazing into the untried depths would not stir. However, he finally broke the mysterious pause, saying, 'Paul Langdon killed three big water-snakes right there last June!'

"Then, after reassuring himself by vigorous splashes with his staff, he submitted to the proprieties."

As late as 1820 the town had only five painted houses and these were red. Carpets were unknown and stoves very rare. Coopering was carried on by Solomon and Luther Hills, who also ran a sawmill. A fulling-mill and several cider-mills were numbered among the manufactures and cider brandy was not neglected. The ministers frequently held preaching services in this portion of the parish and often these were in private houses.

An eccentric character who dwelt alone in a forest clearing in East Longmeadow was a hermit, Aaron Burt. He had a vineyard

and an orchard that supplied an abundance of fruit, which he generously gave to his curious visitors. His hut was surrounded with bees, which rendered him honey and never stung him. He had a family of domestic animals whom he petted and bathed and talked to as if they were human friends. He had trained them to follow him and when he went to Springfield, or visited the village street, the bullock, the heifer, the sheep, the calf and the pig decorated with ribbons all fell into line. Burt, clad in sheepskins, would stride along in front with a serious dignity, looking like some old prophet. People said he had been disappointed in love. He usually behaved well when attending divine worship, but sometimes the tithing men had to put him out. He might suddenly feel called upon to preach and make a loud harangue denouncing the sins of the times, or break into the midst of the service with a wild song. When Pastor Dickinson tried to dissuade Burt from his preaching one day, Burt replied: "You and I are engaged in the same business. We both preach the same gospel; only I go ahead with the breaking-up drag and you follow with a fine-tooth harrow to cover the seed."

Meantime the eastern settlement was growing stronger and resented having to travel to "West Longmeadow" for transacting all town business, so about 1820 the annual town meetings alternated, one year in one center and the following year in the other. Some lively meetings they were, too, as rivalry increased with the growth of the eastern section.

After worshipping with the parent church at Longmeadow Village for almost ninety years, the Congregationalists of East Longmeadow formed a church organization of their own on the sixteenth of June, 1827, under the name of "Proprietors of the Meeting House of the Third Religious Society in Longmeadow." This lengthy and cumbersome title was gradually shortened and changed. The church was built on a hill overlooking the village in 1828, but about thirty years later it was moved down into the village and the former site used for a parsonage.

A Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1853 and the same year their place of worship was built and dedicated. A parsonage soon followed and the society seemed very prosperous, no doubt stimulated by their nearness to the Wesleyan Academy in Wilbraham.



The Roman Catholics began holding meetings in the town hall about 1883 and soon built themselves a church. In 1895 they bought the house which had formerly been the Congregational parsonage and fitted it for a parish house. About this time, St. Michael's, which had formerly been a mission of the Mittineague Church, was formed into an independent parish in connection with the Catholic Church in Longmeadow.

The newest church organization is the Swedish Lutheran and all five denominations are still serving the thriving town of East Longmeadow.

The town owes its development principally to the valuable quarries of red sandstone which have made its name known all over the country. This stone underlies a considerable portion of the town and has been quarried from the time of the early settlements. At first the stone was considered common property and the one who discovered a ledge claimed the right to work it, even though located on the land of another. Grindstones were one of the first products of the quarries and then the surface stone was used for underpinnings and rough work. Gradually, as its quality became known, orders came in from all parts of the country. Much of it was used in the United States Armory buildings at Springfield and for the foundation of the formidable iron fence which encloses the armory grounds. In early times it was used for gravestones and can be recognized in many a cemetery up and down the valley. It is still employed to some extent for monumental work. Its widest use, however, was as a material for public buildings and fine private residences. Among such buildings were the Youths' Companion Building of Boston; Harvard University Gymnasium, Law School Building and Sever Hall at Cambridge; and there are numerous others in many parts of the country.

The color of the stone varied in the different quarries, some of it being "Kibbe" red sandstone, so-called, and part of it a light brown-stone. Apparently the supply is inexhaustible, although it has been in the process of removal more or less systematically for over two centuries.

The years around 1880 were the great days of East Longmeadow. New citizens were coming into the town and business was booming. The Irish were the first national group to come in any numbers. Then the Canadians flocked in each spring to work in the quarries,

but most of them went back home in the fall and did not become permanent residents. The big lads from Sweden were the next to arrive and they sent back for their wives and sweethearts and adopted East Longmeadow as a new home. The expert stone cutters and carvers were mainly English and Scotch, and many of their descendants are still carrying on in the town.

The increased use of cement and the change of fashion toward lighter colored stone spelled the doom of the sandstone quarries and now only a little is gotten out each year. The work is done mainly by Italians, who in their turn are becoming citizens.

An old atlas of 1894 shows fifteen different sandstone quarries in the town, which also gives an idea of the extensive work done. Now several of the quarries are used as swimming pools and some are even fitted up with electric lights for swimming at night.

The Shakers were familiar figures in the town years ago, when their settlement in Enfield, Connecticut, was flourishing. The men did their errands about the streets dressed in plain dark clothes and wide-brimmed hats. The women wore full skirts and plain bodices covered with little shoulder capes and on their heads the famous Shaker bonnets, of plaited straw in the summer and of quilted material in the winter. These bonnets were of sober colors as were their gowns and were unadorned with flower or ribbon. The big substantial wagons and well-kept horses of the Shakers were often seen driving through the town to Springfield with the products of their farms and of home industries. The Enfield Shakers were known for miles around for their good cooking and many sleigh rides or summer driving parties stopped there for a meal. Signs in the dining room directed the visitors to "Take all you want, but eat all you take." They were good providers and generous, but abhorred waste, and the person who left uneaten food on his plate was not welcome.

The Shakers rendered a real service to the communities about by bringing up orphan children or furnishing a temporary home for children in need. These homeless ones were given the best of care and taught habits of work and thrift.

One of these wrote as follows in 1934:

"It was over thirty years ago that I was living as a ward of Elder George Wilcox at Shaker Station, Enfield, Connecticut. We used to drive to Springfield with butter, strawberries,

and a few eggs. The 'colt' gave me a merry ride through the 'crowded' streets one day, when one of those new contraptions, an automobile, with gear wheels and noisy cog chain on the right side, parked itself in front of my steed. I can hear the crowd now, calling much to my embarrassment, 'Hold him, Shaker,' as I went scooting around the corners; and I can see Elder George wildly running down the street after me, his long snow-white hair and linen duster floating behind him like banners in the wind."

The Highland Division of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad was put through in 1876. For some time it was in a flourishing condition, but later it became merely a freight line. However, it again filled a great need during the flood of 1936. One train went through at that time with ninety-six cars.

East Longmeadow showed its appreciation of its famous home product in 1882 when its town hall was built of the local stone. Its newest public development is a fine athletic field, the equal of many in much larger places. Four cemeteries serve the town. In one of them are some very unusual gravestones, which have inset on the front near the lettering a picture of the person buried beneath. Originally a little slab of stone hung on a pivot covered the picture and protected it from the weather, but in some cases this protection has now been destroyed.





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*Granville, Home of the Drum Industry*

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## CHAPTER IX

### *Granville, Home of the Drum Industry*

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The territory of Granville, at first called Bedford, was sold by Toto, an Indian chief, in 1686, to James Cornish for a gun and sixteen brass buttons. Toto was the friendly Indian servant of a white family in Springfield who informed his master that King Philip's warriors were concealed in the fort on Pecowsic Brook and waiting a chance to attack and burn the town.

James Cornish and his partner, William Fuller, sold the region in 1713 and five years later it was sold again to the Bedford company of proprietors. They, in turn, offered the land for sale and succeeded in interesting a group of men from Durham, Connecticut. Among these there were three of the name of Baldwin, five Bates men, four Robinsons and three Curtises. The proprietors of the Bedford plantation lived chiefly in or near Boston, and only one, Samuel Gillett, settled on the land he owned.

But the first settler was Samuel Bancroft, who in 1735 came over from West Springfield and built a rude log cabin for himself and his family. It was located near a small brook in the northeast part of the town, not far from where the first schoolhouse was later erected. Bancroft was a kind-hearted, industrious man and long wore small clothes, triangular cocked hat and bushy wig. He had but one son, Jonathan, who had three sons, but before a century had passed the descendants in Granville numbered nearly a hundred persons. As soon as possible Mr. Bancroft built a large house of thick, hewn plank as a refuge for himself and his neighbors in case of an Indian attack, but there is no record of their being molested, though they no doubt availed themselves of the protection of the fort when savages were known to be in the vicinity. The Indians used a cave at times for shelter. It is located near the powerhouse of the Turner's Falls company.

The early settlers were a hardy, upright people, well prepared to face life in a new region and overcome its hardships. Their longevity was remarkable. The ancestor of the Spelmans was from Wales and died at the age of ninety-three. The ancestor of the Cooley family came from Ireland and lived to be ninety. Jonathan Rose reached the remarkable age of one hundred and three, and then perished in his burning house. The Church family ancestor rounded out ninety-five years and a Gibbons reached ninety-two. The men were of great physical strength, too, according to the story told of several teams that were sent to Westfield for cider. While the men there were courteously getting means ready for loading it, Timothy Robinson lifted the barrels and laid them in at the end of a cart, while Thomas Hamilton threw them in over the wheel.

After providing shelter for their families and starting their crops, the little colony turned its attention to the establishment of a church. "The First Church of Christ" in Bedford plantation was formed in 1744, as the result of the preaching of Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards. Edwards was minister at Northampton and followed Solomon Stoddard, under whom the religious revival started. Northampton was famous as the center of what was known as "the great awakening," so that as the Reverend Edwards said, "people have been ready to look on Northampton as a heaven on earth." The great English preacher, Whitefield, came to Northampton on the evening of October 16, 1740, having preached at Hadley on the way. It is said that when he preached at Hadley his voice was heard in Hatfield, but the leading men in that town would not allow him to preach there.

Reverend Moses Tuttle, a graduate of Yale College, was the first settled pastor in Granville. His wife was one of the ten daughters of the Reverend Timothy Edwards, of East Windsor. She, alone, of all the family was strange and wayward. When Mr. Tuttle asked the consent of the father to marry his daughter, he replied: "I shall not forbid it, but you cannot live with her." "Why," inquired Mr. Tuttle, "is she not a Christian?" "I hope so," replied Mr. Edwards, "but grace may live where you cannot." When the wedding day arrived the Connecticut River was impassable and when he reached the bride's house a little after the day appointed, she refused to see him. At length she consented to an interview with a partition between them. Said she: "Why did you not come on the day agreed on?" "The

high flood in the river rendered it absolutely impassable," he replied. "That's no excuse at all," responded the lady. The father's prediction was verified and Mr. Tuttle had a comfortless home.

It was largely due to his efforts that the first meetinghouse was built, but there is no record to tell when the corner stone was laid. There is a faint tradition that when it was raised every man, woman and child in the town could be comfortably seated on its sills. The building had neither bell nor stove nor cushions. The Reverend Mr. Tuttle himself gave eight hundred and sixty-three pounds old tenor toward the meetinghouse, the largest single gift it has ever received.

The first house in the Second Parish of Granville was built of stone by Deacon David Rose, with the capacity of a fort in case of an attack by the Indians. The people passed through fearful apprehensions, but none perished by the tomahawk. In one instance a child was born in the night without a candle being lighted in the house from fear of lurking savages. In the "Old French War" an enlistment was called for at Granville and it is stated that four men from here went and were tentmates. When they returned they settled in the same vicinity and died, respectively, at the ages of eighty-two, eighty-six, eighty-nine and ninety years.

Granville was incorporated as a district in 1754, having all the privileges and duties of a town except that of sending a representative to the General Court. It was at this time the name was changed from Bedford because there was already a town of that name in Massachusetts. The name Granville was in honor of John Carteret, Earl of Granville. This State furnished one-third of all the soldiers in the Revolution and Granville citizens early caught the spark of patriotic fervor. On July 11, 1774, a committee was appointed at a town meeting "to inspect the debate" subsisting between the Mother Country and America. They reported a number of spirited and patriotic resolutions upholding their rights and privileges. In March, 1775, this little country town voted to raise fifty pounds to encourage fifty men to enlist as "minute men," and when Captain Lebbeus Ball marched from the town to Boston, after the battle of Lexington, he is said to have had sixty in his company. A second company of seventy-three went out the next year and one record says that fourteen Granville men lost their lives during the war. Luke Hitchcock, a



pillar of the town, died of camp fever at New Lebanon on his way home from Crown Point.

The distemper reached the East Parish, as many as thirty-seven dying in the space of two months. Three epidemics of smallpox later took toll of the town and the deadly spotted fever prevailed in 1812. Aside from these ravages Granville has always been a healthy town and records kept in East Granville for half a century show that one in thirty of the population reached the age of ninety years.

At the time of the colonial census, in 1776, Granville had a population of 1,126 and was fifth in size among the towns in the county. During the next fifteen years the population increased rapidly and in 1790 Granville contained four hundred more inhabitants than Springfield, although its territory was less in extent. After Tolland was set off in 1810 the town retained its comparative numbers until the tide of settlement turned about 1830.

When the town was new it produced splendid fields of wheat and the finest pasturage and abounded in game. Valley Brook, running from north to south, divides the town. The mountains are named Sodom on the east; Bald Mountain; Bad-luck, named by a party of unsuccessful hunters; Sweatman's Mountain, from which could be seen at one time nearly forty church steeples; and Liberty Hill, which received its name because a liberty pole was erected there during the Revolution.

The maxim of the Pilgrims, "a school for every district, a Bible for every family, a minister for every town," was very fully carried out in Granville. As early as 1762 the town voted to raise twenty pounds for the support of schools and each succeeding year, except 1775 and 1776, when so much was needed for the soldiers, appropriations have been made for education. In 1837 an academy was erected in Middle Granville.

Granville men were on the side of law and order in Shays' Rebellion. Colonel Timothy Robinson and a company of the "court party," when on their way to Springfield in defense of the government, were met by a party of the mob double their number and, after a skirmish near the great rock, were taken prisoners. The colonel, as being the most obnoxious, was placed under a strong guard. The next day was the Sabbath and he so zealously read and prayed with them and discoursed on the folly of resisting law by arms that they all



became politically converted and the day after proceeded to Springfield in the cause of law and order.

Oliver Phelps was a servant boy in Granville and afterward a peddler. Then he was commissary in the town for supplying the army with provisions during the Revolution. In 1788 he and Nathaniel Gorham, another Granville man, bought from the State of Massachusetts for £300,000 (about \$175,000) the preëemptive rights to 6,000,000 acres of land in western New York, but of which they actually obtained little over one-third. The next spring Phelps left Granville with men and means to explore his new territory. He opened a land office at Canandaigua and drew up such a fine system for survey of his holding by townships and ranges that it served as a model for the United States Government when it opened new lands. On his tombstone in Canandaigua are two hundred and sixty-six words, ending with "Enterprise, Industry and Temperance cannot always ensure success, but the fruit of these virtues will be felt by society."

A foundling colored boy, Lemuel Haynes, was brought up by Deacon David Rose. He got his education in the chimney corner by the light of pine knots. The deacon required him to read a sermon aloud on Saturday evening at family worship. One evening he slipped in one of his own sermons and the deacon was greatly pleased. He inquired: "Lemuel, is that Davis' sermon, or Watts' or Whitefield's?" Haynes had to confess that it was his own and at the age of twenty-seven he was a licensed preacher of the gospel and no man could better hold an audience. President Dwight listened to him at New Haven with great interest. Many wished him to be the settled minister in Granville, but on account of his color the majority were opposed. After a long life of great usefulness he died at Granville, New York, aged eighty years.

A church was organized in Middle Granville in 1781 and one in West Granville in 1797 with twenty-eight members. The Baptist Church in East Granville, started in 1791, came to be formed because of differences of opinion over the admission to communion. Some of the stricter believers withdrew and called themselves "separates" and an act of excommunication against five of the number widened the breach.

The old first meetinghouse in Granville served its time and was replaced by another on a different site in 1802. The people worked

hard and raised a fund to insure its support and all seemed well until the westward fever drew a large band away to found a colony in Ohio. Honorable Timothy Rose was the leader of the one hundred and seventy-six who went away in the fall of 1805. Fifty-two of them were heads of families and it took them forty-six days to reach their destination—an unbroken wilderness. A church of twenty-four members had been organized the May before the pilgrimage began and the first business on their arrival, as soon as the cattle were released from the wagons, was to hear a sermon. The first tree cut on the plot was that by which public worship was held on the Sabbath, and the first Sabbath, though the sixteenth of cold November, was honored by both forenoon and afternoon services. Granville, Ohio, outgrew the mother town and was the seat of a college and two flourishing academies.

A big event in Granville was the "Jubilee" celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the installation of Reverend Timothy M. Cooley in that place. It was a two-day celebration held in August, 1845, and a large crowd of citizens and friends attended. The New York "Observer's" notice began: "Never since the creation, probably, have the hills of Granville witnessed so lively a scene." Speakers were present from New York and other places and messages came from as far away as Louisiana and Alabama. Tents had been erected on a lawn near the church and the "Jubilee" volume reports that a feast was spread on the tables and by the united efforts of the Granville ladies, with excellent taste, a joyous company of friends was served. More than 2,000 persons shared in the repast. This famous old minister was a Granville boy, who fitted for college under Rev. Noah Atwater, of Westfield, and graduated at Yale. He preached his first sermon in Granville and was ordained there after receiving theological training under the care of a minister in Somers, Connecticut. After being installed in his home town he married Content Chapman and they had ten children.

Dr. Cooley served on the school committee for fifty years and for a time had a private school of his own, instructing over eight hundred pupils. He also assisted sixty young men in their studies for the ministry. His pastorate did not end with the jubilee, as he remained with the church until his death at eighty-seven, a term of over sixty-three years. A jubilee monument was erected in memory of this event

and fifty years later a second successful celebration was held at the same place.

Granville Corners is the manufacturing center of the town since a drum shop was established there in 1854 by Silas Noble and James P. Cooley. The latter's son, Ralph, died in 1935, but the business continues in the family and is now conducted by two nephews named Hiers. These young men have grown up in the town and are interested in carrying on according to the established standards of the firm. The first drums were made in the Cooley kitchen, but soon larger quarters were necessary and now there are several fine, substantial buildings which constitute the plant.

The firm's most famous drum was made in 1860 from rails split by Abraham Lincoln. It had hooks of solid silver and cords of red, white and blue silk. Over a thousand styles and sizes are made, which retail between ten cents and \$35. The wood used is largely birch, beech and maple and the Hiers brothers have extensive woodlands to draw from, though not all the lumber is produced locally. Years ago the firm operated its own tannery to which the farmers brought their spare hides, but that branch of the industry has passed away.

In this largest and oldest of toy drum manufactories in the country, situated so pleasantly by its own trout pond in a peaceful valley, the same men continue to work year after year for this old firm. A look at the pay roll shows that many have been on the list from thirty to fifty years, while the longest term is sixty-eight years!

A comparatively new firm in Granville is the Wackenback Box Company, which employ several men making wooden boxes.

Liberty Hill, located in the south central part of the town, has on its summit a liberty pole, first erected during the Revolutionary War. The liberty pole is still maintained by the town of Granville.

In the northeastern part of Granville are three beautiful reservoirs which supply Westfield with water. The well kept pine and spruce watershed on the steep gorge-like slopes makes a delightful park of the section.

The agricultural society holds an exhibition each fall at the community house and on the grounds surrounding. At this time the church people of the whole town serve the famous Granville chicken pie dinner.





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*Hampden and the Scantic River*

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## CHAPTER X

### *Hampden and the Scantic River*

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The town of Springfield once included all the territory from Hadley on the north to Connecticut on the south and from Russell on the west to Monson on the east. Part of this was known as the "Outward Commons" and was eventually allotted to individuals. A certain amount was reserved for the ministry and the schools, and the rest was divided into five sections. Each of the legal citizens received some part of all five sections. The surveyors, either through caution, carelessness or ignorance, allowed only sixteen feet to the rod, so that on the south side of the third division there remained unappropriated a strip of land sixty-two rods wide and four miles long. This received the name of "overplus land" and is within the limits of the town of Hampden, which was originally known as the South Parish of Wilbraham.

The Fourth Parish of Springfield, afterward called Wilbraham, was incorporated in 1741, eleven years after the coming of its first settler, Nathaniel Hitchcock. In that year Stephen Stebbins came from Longmeadow and made the first settlement in the south part of the town. He built his house on the north bank of the Scantic and soon Aaron Stebbins, his brother, built north of him. Paul Langdon, who brought the first four-wheeled wagon into the parish, settled south of Stephen Stebbins on the "overplus land." This wagon had brought Langdon's household goods from Salem to Hopkinton, from there to Union, Connecticut, and from Union to South Wilbraham. Other settlers gradually followed and Lewis Langdon, son of Paul, built the first sawmill in town in 1750. It stood on the south side of the present road, a little east of Ravine Mill.

At first the people went to the northern part of the town for the Sabbath services, but as the little settlement grew they came to feel strong enough in numbers to establish preaching of their own. Their first request to the town, twenty-four years after the first house was



built in the South Parish, was simply for money to support preaching in the winter, when it was such a long and tedious journey to the meetinghouse already established. Their request was refused and in 1767 they asked the privilege of having preaching two months during the winter season at their own expense, but this, also, was refused. The desire for a separate Sabbath service continued to grow, however, and in order to accomplish their purpose they asked, five years later, to be made into a separate town. When this request was refused, then reconsidered and voted and changed again, the people appealed to the General Court. Finally, at a town meeting held December 24, 1781, a committee from other villages was chosen to consider the method of dividing the town into parishes. The petition for the division of Wilbraham stated that there were forty-seven families within the limits asked for, as well as twenty young men and plenty of unoccupied land. They acknowledged and lamented that they were not all of one faith, but expressed the hope that the building of a "House of God" among them would make them of one heart.

John Hale, Luke Bliss and William Pynchon, Jr., of Springfield, constituted the committee and gave some good advice as well as making the desired division. They expressed their "great unhappiness that a town so respectable as the town of Wilbraham" should have gotten into such a state of affairs and their hope "that love and harmony" might once more prevail. In accordance with this division, an Act of the General Court on June 20, 1782, created the North and South Parishes of Wilbraham, making Lieutenant Thomas Merrick, by his desire, a part of the North Parish and David Wood, Jesse Carpenter and Jonah Beebe and his lands a part of the South Parish.

About this time Deacon Nathaniel Warriner of the old church died and left four hundred pounds: "To be the one-half given to the support of a gospel ministry, provided that all other churches which are or may be in this town of a different constitution from the standing order of churches in this land shall forever be excluded from receiving any benefit from the same." With their share of this gift and other funds the South Parish had seven hundred and fifty dollars with which to start building a meetinghouse. They did not wait for the church building, however, but in summer held preaching service under some large oak trees and in winter met in private houses.

The meetinghouse frame was put together by Paul Langdon and raised in June, 1783. It stood on the green facing west and for many years was unpainted. There were rough boards for pews and a box for a pulpit, but it was their sanctuary and dear to their hearts. It was two years more before the church organization was completed and the "Form of Union" signed. Mr. Abishai Colton preached a fast day and four Sabbaths at four dollars for each day. Mr. Ebenezer Kingsbury preached two Sabbaths and Mr. Lathrop Thompson ten Sabbaths, and there were others who "supplied." But finally when there were sixty-five members, and a meetinghouse with glass in the windows, they were ready to settle a minister. Rev. Moses Warren had preached for them as a candidate and they gave him the "call" with a vote of fifty-three against seven. He was to have a settlement of £150 with a yearly salary of £70 and twenty-four cords of wood. Wheat, rye, Indian corn, oats, wool and flax were to make up part of his pay. The young man was a graduate of Harvard and had studied theology under Reverend Elisha Fisk, his former pastor at Milford. When he was ordained he wore knee-breeches, long stockings and black silk gloves. The services occupied two days and a big dinner was served for the delegates and guests at the house of Colonel Bliss. Tradition says there was not room enough in the fireplace to cook for so many and a part of the dinner was prepared out of doors under the trees.

Church discipline was more rigidly enforced in the early days than it is now and John Williams, who was proposed for communion, confessed to his examiners that he had said "By George." But some witnesses testified that he said "By God" instead, and though one man was sure he only heard the word "By," the committee voted Williams guilty. There followed the usual long sequence of votes and counter votes and disagreements, but the outcome was the reinstatement of Williams. He in turn complained to the Hon. John Bliss, justice of the peace, that Elisha Woodward, of Wilbraham, shopkeeper, "did utter profane oaths and curses," saying: "The infernal cuss, John Williams, I mean, if I had him out of the New England states, by G—d I would horsewhip him." He complained in the same manner of Phœbe Barton that she had behaved "rudely and indecently," but we do not know what penalties, if any, were invoked.

Deacon John Hitchcock, a pillar of the church, resigned his office in the midst of the discussions over John Williams, because he felt he had been misrepresented in a report Colonel Bliss had made. He gave as his reasons for resigning, "that he was advanced in life and also on account of some present circumstances." He was the son of John Hitchcock, of Springfield, and was physically the most remarkable man of his day. It was said of him that he could outrun a horse, turn over a hay cart and lift a load of hay. He had a double row of teeth, sound at the time of his death, and he could break a tenpenny nail in his mouth. He said he did not know a man he could not whip or run away from. The day he was seventy years old he remarked to his wife that when he was first married he used to amuse her by taking down his hat from where it hung with his toes and added: "I wonder if I could do it now." Thereupon he jumped from the floor, took off the hat with his toes, came down on his feet like a cat, hung up the hat on its nail, turned to the table, asked a blessing and ate of the repast then ready.

The first treasurer in the parish was Colonel John Bliss, a prominent citizen of the town, who had been a member of the Legislature and was a judge of the Court of General Sessions of Hampden County for many years. Elizur Tillotson, Jr., was keeper of one of the taverns in the village. He had had a license, but when he applied for one in 1807 some of the leading men of the parish disapproved of his request and stated that his place was not a proper one for a tavern, nor was his condition such as would enable him to keep a house of any benefit to the public. This statement was signed by twenty men and Tillotson failed to get his license. He was quite angry at those who signed the petition, but chiefly against Judge Bliss, and his actions were such that Mr. Bliss brought the matter before the church in a letter saying that Tillotson had accused him of lying. "And also that if I and General Shepard and one more had been dead or in our graves, where we ought to have been years ago, he should have obtained his license. And further, that on hearing of the death of Captain Stebbins, he observed that the Lord had begun a good work, and that if he would proceed and carry off Colonel Bliss, Comfort Chaffee and John Goodwell we should have good times; all of which I think are contrary to a Christian profession and I desire the church to take them under consideration and to proceed with Brother



Tillotson as the gospel directs." Mr. Tillotson was censured and suspended, but at last restored to good standing.

Hampden experienced a strong wave of the revival which swept over New England about 1822, when the Reverend Asahel Nettleton, of Somers, was invited to visit the town after some of the young people had been greatly stirred by attending meeting when he was preaching. Only a few hours' notice was given of his first service, but when he reached the hall it was crowded and "multitudes" were still assembling. They stood at windows and doors and even trees and the roofs of adjacent buildings were occupied by anxious hearers. The preacher's subject was "The ground of alarm to awakened sinners." There had never been a general revival in the place from its first settlement and the scenes were new and interesting to the people. Opposition was offered by the Universalists as well as by the irreligious. Reuben Hendricks stood at the door with a club one night determined to break up the meeting, but Captain Comfort Chaffee opened his house and Mr. Nettleton preached there. Opposition somewhat subsided as people came under the spell of the earnest and eloquent preacher who so vividly pictured the joys of heaven and the sufferings of hell. Sobs and sighs accompanied his sermons and his words were echoed by groans of distress. Some were so overwhelmed that they had to be assisted home. Piercing cries of "I am sinking to hell" showed the distress of the sinners. Nearly a hundred were converted in this revival and sixty-two joined the church.

All this excitement occurred during the pastorate of Mr. Warren, of whom a few anecdotes are remembered. On a Sunday before Thanksgiving he exchanged with the minister at Somers, Connecticut; and when he finished reading the proclamation of the Connecticut Governor, he added: "God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts." His family government was mild and his failure to use the rod is named as the reason for his children's disobedience. Once when he was entertaining a neighboring minister he asked his son, John, to get some cider from the cellar. John replied, "I won't," and his father apologized to his guest by saying, "John is generally a good boy, but he has a very bad cold just now."

Mr. Warren died soon after his wife, in 1829, at over seventy years of age, after being pastor in South Wilbraham over forty years. He was a good man, full of sympathy for the needy and beloved by his people.

It was during the service of the second pastor, Lucius W. Clark, that the Ladies' Benevolent Society was formed "to raise funds by means of manual labor for the purpose of promoting some benevolent object." In the summer of 1838, after much agitation and collecting of money the meetinghouse was moved from the green where it had long marred the looks of the street. The expense of moving was calculated at \$50 and the new site, Captain Sessions' corner, cost \$300, but the captain pledged \$5 for every \$100 raised. Extensive alterations included rooms built on the lower floor, ten feet added for a belfry and the buying of a bell.

The story of Hampden during the Revolution is a part of the history of Wilbraham, as only church matters were handled separately. Sometime after the South Parish was set off it seemed to the residents of that part of the town that they did not receive equal consideration with the rest of the town and that fewer of their members were put in positions of authority. Still some of the finest timber for town offices came from there and it was a progressive and prosperous part of the region.

Agriculture was the predominant industry, but the Scantic has furnished power for manufacturing since the first sawmill and gristmill were built on its banks in 1772 by Lewis Langdon. Walter Burt and Jonathan Flint each had fulling and carding mills just below the village bridge. A short distance from there a man by the name of Roper had a clover-cleaning mill and also made chains for farm use. The Chaffees were early tanners and sold their product to the shoe factories in Wales. There were potash plants and paper-mills, and Marcus Beebe made plows which he sold mainly in the South. Sumner Sessions built the first woolen mill in 1843, and after several changes the business passed into the hands of the South Wilbraham Manufacturing Company with increased output. Sumner Sessions was a descendant of Robert Sessions, who had taken part in the "Boston Tea Party" and came to the town in 1781. The Sessions family has since been prominent in the civil and religious life of the town. The Hampden woolen mills were started by Eleazer Scriptor in 1858 as the Ravine Mill. The Scantic Woolen Mill Company made fancy cassimeres and when John Kenworthy got the plant he manufactured yarn, cloth and blankets.

Soon after 1840 a number of public-spirited men wanted to establish a school of higher grade than the town afforded and gathered funds by private subscription until Hampden Academy was founded in 1844. George Brooks was the first teacher and the school flourished until the increasing improvement in the town schools made it unnecessary.

The Methodist Episcopal Church in Hampden dates its history from 1830. Soon after that a church was built and the organization became a strong factor in the life of the town. Robert Sessions, Jr., a farmer in the town, is credited with being the founder.

During the pastorate of Reverend James Hazen the Millerites created considerable excitement over their prophecies of the end of the world. Mr. Hazen felt it his duty to expose the fallacy of this movement and courageously preached strong sermons denouncing it.

A Baptist society and church was organized in 1855, drawing its original membership from the recently dissolved Monson church.

South Wilbraham became the town of Hampden by an Act of the Legislature on March 28, 1878. The town immediately voted \$1,000 for schools and \$1,000 for the care of paupers.

Repairs were needed in the meetinghouse by 1883 and funds gathered for a new bell could be turned to this purpose because Francis C. Sessions, of Columbus, Ohio, had given the parish a bell. Work and materials were donated, the church was painted and a new carpet laid. A final touch was added with the gift of a chandelier from the Beebe family.

Hampden was sometimes called "Pokeham," either in humor or derision. Poke is the plant "everlasting" or tobacco of the Indians. The name is traceable as far back as the Revolution. Another name, "Rocky Dundy" or "Rocky Dunder," was applied to the mountain regions of the easterly slope. Dunder is German-English for thunder and refers to the noise from the guns of the early settlers.

Goat Rocks is where an early settler saw a goat tumble from the rocks. World's End Brook and World's End Meadow received their names because they are so far from Springfield. The three mountains in the town are called Pine Mountain, Bald Mountain and Mount Vision.

The story of Hampden's "glass steamer" is told to all strangers that come to town and related also by former residents wherever



they may be. The steamboat had a glass bottom, but the upper part was built of solid brick for the protection of passengers against hurricanes such as destroyed the mills of the town years ago. It made one trip in July and one in August each summer from Brennan's Dock on the upper Scantic to the Connecticut River and back. It was the only boat of its kind in the world.

A former resident of the town, Anice Stockton, now Mrs. Anice Terhune, wife of Albert Payson Terhune, is the author of two novels of New England life, "Boarder Up at Em's" and "Eyes of the Village." While the names in them are fictitious it is surmised that early Hampden residents are depicted.

The little red schoolhouse on Glendale Road has been bought by the Art Guild of Springfield and is used by them as a summer art center. In the rear of the building is an old Indian oven which eventually will be placed in the museum at Springfield.

Hampden now has one central school building to which busses bring the pupils. It was the gift of Elizabeth Sessions in 1932 and a part of it is used as a town hall.

A boys' camp is run by Cyrus Gannon, of Springfield, on Glendale Road. It is by an artificial lake and there is a chance for all sorts of sports.

The East Longmeadow Rod and Gun Club, one of the largest of its kind in the State, owns the old Carmody farm on Mill Street. Skeet shooting and rifle shooting are indulged in on Sunday afternoons in summer. Field trials of bird and 'coon dogs are held there in the fall and a few pheasants are raised each year.

A handsome World War Monument, erected by C. H. Burleigh, stands on an adequate plot of ground in the center of the town.

In recent years many of the old homes have been attractively remodeled by prominent Springfield residents for summer homes and several new places have been built.



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*Holland, Settled by Pioneer Blodgett*

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## CHAPTER XI

### *Holland, Settled by Pioneer Blodgett*

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The small Massachusetts town named Holland used to be a part of Old Hampshire County, but now it is in Hampden County and has for near neighbors Brimfield on the north and Wales on the south. Its area is about twelve square miles.

Governor Winthrop secured from two Nipmuck Indians a deed of land about ten miles square around the black lead mines in the vicinity.

Here were hills and valleys heavily covered with timber and the streams and ponds were full of fish. Soon the earliest settler, Joseph Blodgett, arrived. He was married in 1719 and it seems likely that he went from Lexington to Brimfield shortly after his marriage. He had seventeen children, eleven of them sons. Beyond Brimfield Village is Steerage Rock with its watch-tower. Northward the eye roams to where Monadnock in New Hampshire looms in the distance and easterly Wachusett with its summit house can be distinctly seen. On every hand are deposits of glacial drift that form much of the surface. A village of Indians is believed to have been located on what is known as Curtis Island, near Five Bridges Corner, and another was on Indian Field Hill. Arrowheads are found in the region and some wigwams stood on or near the shores of the ponds, where food was plentiful. The cleared patches about it were sandy or loamy and easily worked by the squaws for raising corn and beans. According to tradition there was a natural cavity in a ledge at the northwest corner of Holland that was used as a pot for cooking by heating the stone.

Holland derived its name from Lord Holland who, as Charles James Fox, won America's affection as an eloquent defender of its rights. The first town meeting assembled in July, 1783, and among other things made choice of a constable and a tything man. Also they chose fence-viewers and voted that the constables warn town meetings by posting a copy of the warrant on the meetinghouse door. They

made choice of a "hogreaf," that is, a man to look after stray hogs. It was voted that swine could run at large when properly ringed and yoked, and they chose Sherebiah Ballard for sealer of weights and measures. They ended by voting that the annual town meetings be on the first Monday of March.

Preaching services were held in the homes at first, but a meeting-house was built in 1764 and a Congregational church organized in 1765. The first regular minister, Reverend Ezra Reeve, was ordained the same day and faithfully served the people for fifty-three years.

In 1760 the General Court, in regulating the observance of the Lord's Day, enacted "that each town and district within this province shall chose certain persons of good substance and sober life and conversation to be wardens of each town or district, and all such wardens shall be under oath to serve in such office." They were obliged to inspect inns or houses of public entertainment on the Lord's Day and in the evening, and were to examine persons suspected of unnecessary travel on the Lord's Day. A warden was to carry a white wand not less than seven feet long. Profaning the Lord's Day made the offender liable to a jail sentence of five to ten days. Tything men were to have a black staff two feet long tipped with brass. Refusal to serve as tything man subjected the offender to a fine of forty shillings. Maintaining order in the meetinghouse came to be their chief function.

Many of the early settlers of the town buried their dead on their homesteads, a custom very general here in New England that often led to losing all knowledge as to where persons were buried. The Indians had a burying ground in Holland in a pasture back of a house and tradition says that the Indians sometimes came back to visit these graves. In 1763 an acre of land for a burial ground was voted and here are the oldest graves of white settlers, but no plan of the cemetery was made to show the position of graves and who was buried in them. Thus, the graves of many soldiers of the Revolution have been lost so that only eight graves of that war are known. An old hearsehouse used to stand on the north side of the roadway not far from the gate. It was later sold and others took its place. The years went on and in 1866 we find the following: "voted to buy a good decent hearse forth-with."



Holland became a town in 1836. Some interesting notes about a Holland mill are these: Mr. May was developing the power and his neighbor, Mr. Back, was sceptical. He didn't believe there was sufficient water to grind corn and he ridiculed the builder. When the mill was completed, just to make merry with the miller and demonstrate the shortcomings of the mill, Mr. Back sent his boy, Harding Gates, down to the mill with a peck of corn to be ground. He was greatly surprised when the little boy soon returned with the meal and he had to admit that the mill could grind. That was the first grist which came to the new mill.

In later years this son, H. G. Back, and Gardner Wallis quarreled and they agreed never again to speak to each other. But shortly after, Mr. Back was crossing this mill pond on the ice when he broke through. He was unable to get out and he looked around and saw Gardner Wallis in his yard above the pond. He remembered their agreement never to speak to each other, but rather than drown he shouted to Mr. Wallis for assistance. Mr. Wallis rescued him and the two men became staunch friends. Mr. Back in telling of the accident in after years would close the tale as follows: "Don't never say you won't say nothing to nobody, for you don't know how soon you may have to."

When South Brimfield, which included Holland and Wales, was incorporated into a town the colonies had just secured their freedom from England and they were very jubilant over it. In celebrating an event so significant and glorious it was natural that they should be joyful not with explosives only, but with what would tend to hilarity. In colonial times England had kept her colonies supplied with rum and molasses from her West Indian colonies and the grocers well knew what commodity they could sell readily and realize a good profit. Testimony is not lacking with regard to the general use of alcoholic stimulants, especially rum at celebrations, Fourth of July, Cornwallis Day, election day and the like, when many of the gathering would be in a condition not strictly sober. Pastors on calling days would return home in a state which showed that they had partaken of the cup which cheers, and the adage "like parson, like people" proved too often true.

Before the district of South Brimfield was incorporated in 1762 it had two schoolhouses, which were torn down in 1783 and four

new ones built in their place. These buildings were of wood, and not being painted, soon were weather beaten on the outside and beaten by rough usage on the inside. This explains why the district had to rebuild its schoolhouses again in 1800. One vote records that a "bridle path" was to be built in 1789 from Dr. Thomas Wallis' to the south schoolhouse. One schoolhouse was built of brick which were probably made in Holland. It seems to have been more pretentious than some of the others for the floor was inclined, each row of desks being higher than the row in front.

The old district schools served their day and generation well, but they would have served the public better if they had not been hornet nests of factions, which trained politicians among the voters, but often defeated instruction for the pupils. When harmony prevailed under efficient teachers good progress was made, but otherwise chaos reigned. Young men from seventeen to twenty years frequently attended in the winter and young women, too. This made the district school a social as well as an educational center, which with its school exhibitions and debates furnished mental stimulus for young and old. Neighborhood prayer meetings were sometimes held in them as was the old-fashioned singing school.

One of the teachers that the southwest district secured in later years was Daniel H. Chamberlain, who became Governor of South Carolina during Reconstruction days. It was his first effort at teaching and he was regarded as a success by the town's people.

A State law finally did away with the system of separately-managed schools in the various districts and the schools themselves were consolidated in 1883 and the empty schoolhouses were gradually sold.

Holland held its town meetings in the meetinghouse for nearly one hundred years. This was the custom in most of the New England towns as the people were of one faith at first and the church was the center of all the social, political, moral and spiritual life. After the new church was built in 1835 the old church stood on the common unused and naturally the question came up of converting it into a town hall, but this plan did not meet with much favor. Town meeting was sometimes held in the Baptist Church and in 1839 it met at Holland Inn, paying a dollar for the privilege. One town meeting was held in a horseshed. The final result of many votes made and reconsidered and changed was that the Baptist society gave their church, which

they had ceased to use, and Holland at last had a town house. Repairs and changes were made and now the school children are accommodated on the lower floor with the town hall above.

The public library in Holland was preceded by the "Holland Social Library Company," of which little is known. In 1892, with the aid of State funds, the public library was started and a room partitioned off in the town hall for the books. This remained satisfactory for some time, but on August 24, 1912, the town dedicated an attractive and suitably placed library building.

For about one hundred years the question of water supply on the plain where stood the church and parsonage was a serious matter and various plans were tried to solve the difficulty. Hauling water from a brook for washing and from a distant well for cooking and drinking could not go on forever. An attempt at digging a well on the place ended in a bed of quicksand into which the stone work kept sinking. A cistern was tried, but it proved to be a source of vexation. Finally, William Lilley gave the town a right to a spring in his field and water was piped to the school and to a trough on the common and the parsonage had an adequate supply.

In connection with the first minister, Reverend Ezra Reeve, the following story is told: On a hot summer morning one of his parishioners, not very pious in habit, went up on Rattlesnake Mountain after a load of wood. While loading he was bitten by one of the reptiles, and knowing the dangerous nature of such a bite, he took the horse and drove post haste for home. There he begged his wife to get the minister as well as the doctor and Mr. Reeve hastened to his bedside. The minister held out hope for the forgiveness of the suffering sinner and received assurance that if he lived his spiritual condition would be of first importance. The next Sunday morning Mr. Reeve, in his pastoral prayer, thanked the Lord for snakes and prayed that more might be sent until the ungodly were all in the fold.

Church buildings as well as schoolhouses were often neglected in the old days and many votes in the Holland town meetings were on the subject of changes and repairs. The deacons' seat, pews on the broad "alley" and benches in the "galleray" had to be arranged for, but most interesting of all is the vote that the pulpit be colored a good handsome "pee" green.



When the old church was torn down in 1839 there was scarcely a bush or tree on the common where now is a beautiful grove. But they must have begun to grow soon after, for in 1864 the town voted to cut all trees on the common. It was Mrs. Kinney, wife of the proprietor of Holland Inn at that time, who is credited with saving the grove. At her own expense she frequently hired men to trim the trees and clean the grounds. She was a capable and tactful woman, an ideal hostess and excellent cook. Under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Kinney, Holland Inn prospered and their descendants are natural restaurant keepers connected with the well-known "Waldorf" chain.

The Baptist Church, whose building subsequently became the town hall, was organized April 12, 1817, in the home of Benjamin Church and he gave most of the lumber used in constructing the edifice. Those of that faith had frequently protested against paying a tax for the support of the Congregational Church, and finally a special certificate was made out to show that a person was attending and supporting the new church and so could not be taxed by the orthodox. The Baptists were active up to 1845 and were succeeded for a short time after 1859 by a Methodist group.

Some of the given names on the old church records are quite uncommon and make one wonder how they originated or why they were used. Zidd, Almarin, Orace, Nabby, Federal, Antipas, Vialy, Mandana, Elven, Monday and Delosha are names of this sort.

A Holland vote recorded in 1792 was not unusual in those years: "To see if the town will provide a place wherein to have the smallpox by way of inoculation or otherwise." This was advocated by Dr. Wallis and several times in various ways was before the town, but the citizens were against the establishment of a pesthouse, though the neighboring town of Wales had one and a whole family in Holland was wiped out in an epidemic and the house was burned to destroy the contagion.

Holland did its part in the Civil War, five of its volunteers being but eighteen years old. There were thirty-nine enrolled from Holland out of a population which numbered only 419.

The most important manufacturing ever carried on in Holland was in the Fuller factory, a four-story brick building erected by Elbridge Fuller for working cotton. It had 1,024 spindles and made



thread in skeins and, later, sheeting and print cloth. Fuller's Village of tenements, warehouses and stores grew up around the factory, which was struck by lightning in 1851 and never rebuilt.

Israel Janes had an early brick kiln on Siog Lake and clay from that vicinity was also used at one time in making earthenware utensils.

About 1798 James Paddock set up a furnace and worked the iron ore which was mined locally, but it was never very good. Later cut nails were for a time manufactured in the town.

Lead from the mine in Sturbridge was ground by Edward Blodgett around 1850. It was a fine grade of graphite and was called plumbago or black lead.

Josiah Hobbs had a tannery in Holland to which the farmers drew hemlock bark. The cattle were frequently driven to the tannery before being killed. The hide from the shoulders of the animals was made into leather for "uppers" and that on the butt into sole leather. The shoemaker visited the families in turn about once a year and stayed from a week to three weeks in a place, according to how much work was waiting for him. An ordinary cobbler might carry with him only two straight lasts, but some people of importance had their own private lasts. Parents often insisted that the boys change their boots each day from one foot to the other that the wear might be more even. They were well greased with mutton tallow in the winter evenings to make them shed water and remain pliable.

The Eclipse line of stages from Hartford to Worcester ran through Holland on the turnpike and one toll gate was on the Stafford Road. General Lafayette went through the town in 1824 and when he stopped to dine at Holland Inn many persons came to see him.

Holland's ponds and beautiful scenery attract summer people and a private colony has grown up around Lost Lake. The Springfield Girls' Club owns one hundred acres on Siog Lake. Siog is an Indian word that means pickerel. James Davis, of Springfield, has a small mink farm in the town.

Holland is the ninth smallest town in population in the State. It numbered only two hundred and one in the last census, less than half of what it was in 1830.



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*Longmeadow, With Its Beautiful Homes*

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## CHAPTER XII

### *Longmeadow, With Its Beautiful Homes*

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To Longmeadow belongs the distinction of being the oldest child of the independent State of Massachusetts, for it was the first town organized after the treaty of peace with Great Britain had made the Nation and State unquestionably free and independent. The name of Longmeadow, which had been used by the settlement and adopted by the precinct, was continued for the town on its incorporation, October 13, 1783, though "Lisbon" and "South Springfield" were favored names at a later date.

William Pynchon, the father of Springfield, acquired "The Long meddow" from some ancient Indians of Agawam for four fathoms of wampum, four coats, four hatchets, four hoes and four knives.

The Indians were not cheated. They attached little value to the land they sold and saw great advantage in having a ready market for their furs and in gaining access to the white men's supplies of cloth, tools, firearms and numberless other things. During forty years they lived in unity with their neighbors and might have continued to do so but for the influence of such Indians as King Philip.

The Indians were also handicapped by their own habits, which were idle and roving. Smallpox had been a scourge to them and warfare among themselves had thinned them so that sometimes for miles there was not a single wigwam. They were most numerous in the vicinity of the great river, where fish abounded and where beavers built their dams. There was a village on Pecowsic Brook, a palisaded fort on Long Hill and a burial ground on the river bank. Skeletons have been revealed from time to time when spring freshets have brought them to light, but what most reminds us of the Indian's former presence is arrowheads and pottery.

On Sunday, March 26, 1676, some of the people of Longmeadow, including women and children, ventured to ride to Springfield for pub-

lic worship in company with several colony troopers. There were sixteen or eighteen men, but some had women behind them on their horses and some had children in their arms. When they were near Pecowsic Brook seven or eight Indians in the bushes fired on the hindmost, killing a man and a maid and wounding others. Then they took two women with babes and retired into a swamp. The rest of the colonists rode forward some distance toward Springfield, set down the women and maids and then returned, but could not find the two women and children. Major Savage, writing of this affair, says:

“In the night I sent out sixteen horsemen to pursue the Indians. They joined men sent from Springfield and overtook the Indians with the captives, who as soon as they saw the English, killed the two children and then used their hatchets to sorely wound the women with blows on their heads. After that they ran into a swamp, where the English could not follow them. The scouts brought back both women and the dead children.”

One of the women was still unconscious when the letter was written, but the other “was very sensible and rational.”

The early settlers built their homes on the convenient lowlands, but in December, 1695, the river was the cause of unexpected changes in the layout of the town. All day the water rose in a mighty flood and the long meadow became a sea. Night came and the relentless water swashed into the cellars, invading the floors and putting out the fires, and still it rose. The Cooleys, dwelling northward, fled to Springfield, while the Blisses and others of the central settlement rowed to the hillside and spent the night in the woods. The Coltons and others, who dwelt southward, rowed past the deserted houses to one near Cooley Brook, and there they ventured to spend the night. But it was the general sentiment in the morning that no more such risks should be tolerated. Removals to Longmeadow Hill began and the spacious Longmeadow Street was located.

The next decision was the voting to raise and shingle a meeting-house thirty-two by thirty-eight feet and then followed a vote “to call a learned orthodox minister to dispense the word of God to us and that the committee take care to provide such a minister as speedy as maybe.” It was further voted “to git or have a schoolmaster, to teach or learn our children to read and write.”

The minister finally chosen was Stephen Williams, a youth of twenty-one. He was a Harvard graduate of a remarkable family that abounded in men of note. One of them was the founder of Williams College; another a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Stephen himself was taken captive by the Indians at the age of ten and a brother and sister were killed on the dreadful night when his mother was slain going through the winter snow toward Canada. He was schooled in wigwams and became expert in all the arts of woodcraft as well as among the Jesuit priests of Quebec.

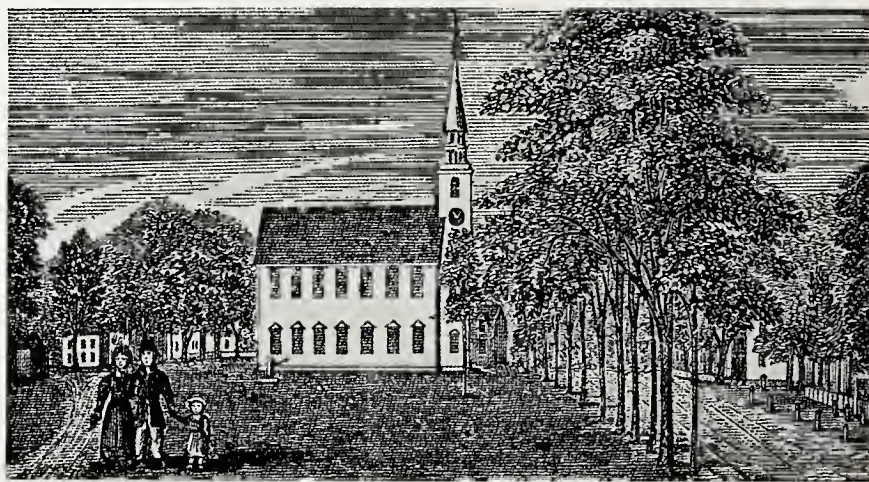
The pastor-elect was not married, but he expected to be, and in due time Stamford, Connecticut, supplied the lady. Acceptance of his call was delayed until three or four acres were fenced and prepared for an orchard in the home-lot and two more lots fenced forty rods back from the street. When he accepted the call, although seven months before his ordination, he proceeded to build a house. It was two storied with a huge central chimney, a generous fireplace, ample north and south rooms and a kitchen, built for a large family and hospitable intentions. The wedding day was July 3, 1718, and Stamford meetinghouse was packed. After the ceremony the happy pair were escorted by their cavalcade to the new Longmeadow parsonage. Their neighbors prepared a royal feast and the pastor and his wife were fairly launched.

The building of the meetinghouse progressed slowly. At first there was the square barn-like frame, pyramidal roof and center bell-tower, but no bell for twenty-seven years. Deacon Nathaniel Burt served instead, going up and down the street beating his drum. The building had only the ground floor with rude benches and the women were seated by themselves on the west side. The next innovation was two glass windows on the south side. As the years progressed a gallery floor was installed and after thirteen years the walls were lathed and plastered. By and by two more glass windows appeared on the north side. Evidently the people paid as they went. Other improvements in the village were a burying ground, a pound and a schoolhouse.

The beating of a drum was for many years the appointed signal of assembling for public worship, but a bell was substituted about 1744. This served until the declaration of peace in 1815, when the bell was rung so violently as to crack it, in the tumultuous joy of the inhabitants.



At length came the aristocratic instalment of three pews, which were carefully located at the lower end where two back seats had been. Next came green plush for a pulpit cushion, then three pews more voted down! But at last the pews got the better of the benches. The meetinghouse in this slow way of getting finished grew old enough to need repairs. In the course of time a new timber meetinghouse was voted and plans were made to provide entertainment, both of victuals and drink, for the raising, in June, 1767. The day came and with it



OLD NORTH VIEW OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,  
LONGMEADOW

a great concourse of people. "I prayed with them in the old meeting-house," wrote the minister, "at eleven of the clock, and they went on prosperously and got up the north side of the roof."

When the workmen stopped at night Mr. Williams prayed again and gave thanks with the people. On Tuesday the steeple was raised and at night Mr. Williams wrote: "We went into the old meeting-house, and I prayed and gave thanks with the people, and we sang a psalm."

What follows is a part of an historical address used at Longmeadow in 1883, but portraying the local customs of a hundred years earlier:

"It is a Sabbathday. The second bell has rung the first peal, and from north and south and east, the people come—the whole population, on foot and in wagons, and the farm



wagons are without springs. Some are drawn by horses, the rest by oxen. The women and the younger children and old men sit on straight-backed chairs or milking stools; the young men and maidens and the boys line the wayside. The bell begins to toll and the congregation throng the meetinghouse steps, porches and aisles. It is a day of greeting and social exchange. After a time Mr. Williams, the minister, came from the parsonage in gown and bands and powdered wig, three-cornered hat, knee breeches, woolen stockings and silver shoe buckles. The bell continued to toll until he passed through the massive double door, with iron-handled latch, and into the high pulpit with its carved work of grapes and pomegranates under the great soundingboard. The deacons were seated in their railed pew beneath the pulpit. There was no stove and for fifty-one years the frosty air of the new meetinghouse was only abated by the women's foot-stoves and the cracking together of frozen boot-heels. The parson sometimes preached in heavy homespun cloak and woolen mittens, and at the nooning grateful indeed was the roaring fire in the great kitchen of the parsonage, and at the tavern bar room, and at all the hospitable neighbors' open houses. There were comforting homemade lunches, apples roasting on the hearth, and hot cider. The congregation stood to pray and only bodily infirmity prevented. If any one sat down in prayer-time, it was a sudden and emphatic protest against the parson's praying for the King and royal family. Yet he is not a Tory, but just an old man to whom the times look dark.

"A few years later, though not without misgivings, he read the Declaration of Independence and gave his benediction to the soldiers as they marched from the meetinghouse door to the camp of General Washington.

"For fifty years the congregation sat down to sing, but after the deacon ceased to line out the psalm, and the pitch-pipe no longer tooted, and the singingmaster had organized the choir, and the bass viols and flutes conspire with young men and maidens to make a joyful noise, they rise up and face about to see the choir. The gallery of the new meetinghouse extended around the east, south and west walls, square pews

lined the gallery, and the negro pew was in the southwest corner. Boys of twelve were in the next pew, and then came the boys of fourteen, then eighteen, which had the advantage of a window. Boys of sixteen were in the last pew on that side. There was a similar arrangement for the girls in the eastern gallery; the single men and women of discreet age had the pews lining the south gallery wall. The choir seats went all around the gallery front and the smaller children sat on benches directly behind the choir. Such an arrangement made the necessity for tything men very great. In one instance the worshippers were appalled to see a red-haired boy in process of being twitched over the pew rail, but hanging on to the balusters with both hands so successfully that with a fearful crash the entire railing came down with the boy."

In the French and Indian War that began in 1744 Parson Williams went as chaplain. The drum and fife announced that Lieutenant Nathaniel Burt, also known as Deacon Burt, was ready with his company to start for the front, and Stephen Williams wrote: "I went over to the deacon's; we sang a psalm and prayed together, and then went off to town, where soldiers were passing along, one company after another."

Soon the reverend chaplain followed to engage in the military service through three campaigns, until failing health compelled his return from the hardships of the camp. A few days afterward was fought the fierce battle of Lake George, in which Deacon Burt was killed with his colonel. The sad message in the handwriting of the chaplain was read on the Sabbath to the Longmeadow congregation. Mrs. Sarah Burt, the widow, fainted on hearing it and was carried out, but revived eventually to marry her reverend pastor.

One famous Longmeadow episode occurred at the beginning of the Revolution, when a company of men with faces blacked and variously disguised, attacked the house of Merchant Samuel Colton; seized his rum, salt and molasses; carried them away, and appointed Jabez Colton—the village "man of affairs"—to be their guardian and salesman. He was a Yale graduate and a classical teacher, familiarly known as "Master Jabe." Merchant Colton was the richest man of the precinct. He had a shipyard on the river bank and his vessels, the "Speedwell" and the "Friendship" were launched at high

water, floated over Enfield Falls, rigged at Hartford, laden with hoops and staves, and these were exchanged at Havana for molasses. Next came a voyage across the Atlantic to Bristol, where the molasses was sold for a general assortment of goods to be distributed again at New England ports ending with Longmeadow.

Merchant Colton's house was raided at midnight July 24, 1776, while the merchant's wife, peeping through the shutters, was scrutinizing the mob so keenly their disguise did not avail. As for Merchant Colton, so broken in spirit was he by the outrage of his neighbors that he never afterward spoke aloud.

At the close of the war the neighbors who did the raiding were sued and judgment was rendered against them in favor of a man who proved his ownership of a part of the goods. The patriotic robbers plead the absence of statute law which did not exist for a time after the Declaration of Independence—the necessity that knows no law. Merchant Colton pleaded the natural equity of private rights, which is the fundamental source of law, and that without law liberty is license and independence a sorry farce. The act of indemnity was passed.

Among the last votes of the precinct was a grant of thirty pounds, good money, to the family of Reverend Stephen Williams, who had recently died, and the first thought of the newly incorporated town was to raise a monument over his honored grave. His ministry rounded out a period of sixty-six years. The last time he appeared in public his deacons carried him in his armchair across the green and helped his tottering steps into the deacons' seat, for he could not mount the pulpit stairs. They heard with tearful eyes his last address and brought him three little ones for his parting blessing. Then they carried him to the home he built in youthful vigor and in a few days more he died in the ninetieth year of his age.

He was plain spoken when there was need and we find him recording that "I again very severely reproved my neighbor, John Colton, for his drinking. I told him I desired to deliver My own soul, and if he should perish, his blood would be on his own head." As a man he was social, cheery and hospitable, and the parsonage abounded with guests and hosts of relatives. Often he went to Springfield jail to visit the prisoners and he was so full of the missionary spirit his heart was always going out to the Indians.



A touching experience in the life of Reverend Stephen Williams occurred in the early summer of 1761, when his younger sister, Eunice, visited him. She had been taken captive at Deerfield with the rest of the family, but remained in Canada when the others returned to Massachusetts. All efforts for her redemption failed, and she forgot her native language and became in effect an Indian, marrying an Indian chief, who adopted the name of Williams. The party which visited Longmeadow included Eunice and her husband, her daughter Katherine and her husband, and several others. They camped in Indian style in the orchard near the parsonage, but were unable to carry on any conversation with the whites until an interpreter had been secured from Deerfield. People came in great numbers to see these dusky relatives of the pastor and Mr. Williams sent for all his numerous family to come and meet their kinsfolk. The house swarmed with people who had to be fed. July 9, after more than a week of the unusual visiting, Williams wrote in his diary: "We are fatigued and full of Company. At night my wife poorly."

The sincerest urging could not persuade Eunice to stay in civilization, though the Legislature offered a grant of land if she consented. Nor would she renounce the Catholic religion to which she had become converted while in Canada. An attempt was made to interest her in conventional garments during her visit, when her female relatives coaxed her into the house one day and dressed her completely in the best they could get. She wore the clothes long enough to exhibit them to her husband and daughter, but he grunted his disapproval and she went back to her blanket. Parson Williams records that both Eunice and her daughter "shed tears" when they said farewell.

Independent thinkers of Longmeadow were ranged on both sides during Shays' Rebellion and the hotheads followed the fiery Pelham captain. But in the War of 1812, like most New Englanders, they were unsympathetic and went on record as condemning many of the measures thought necessary by the Federal Government. When peace was declared the church bell was rung with such vigor that it was cracked and had to be recast.

Agricultural pursuits have held first place in Longmeadow and manufacturing interests have never been very extensive or important. The first of any consequence after the sawmills, gristmills and blacksmith shops necessary for the early inhabitants, was the manufacture



of gold spectacles and gold and silver thimbles, which was begun by Dimond Chandler in 1838. After about ten years he sold his business and started making buttons. That proved so successful that by 1854 he was employing about forty hands. The concern turned out four hundred gross of buttons a day. Some of the cloth for the more expensive buttons ran as high as three dollars a yard.

At the mouth of Pecowsic Brook was at one time a small pistol factory. Later a papier-maché plant turned out pails, basins, globes and various other articles.

In 1784, the year after the town was incorporated, the school appropriation was forty pounds and the amount was increased yearly as the town grew. The first schoolhouse was built on the green, but as new districts were created schoolhouses were built in them, sometimes by the inhabitants of the district. One schoolmaster was Jabez Colton, sometimes called "Master Jabe." He was a Yale graduate and a theological expert, capable of training divinity students. The "Rules and Regulations of the Longmeadow Library Society" were written by him. Apparently a number of people had clubbed together and bought books which were loaned under a rather loose organization and these "Rules and Regulations" were intended to put them on a more businesslike basis. The meetinghouse bell was to be rung at the time of the drawing of books and if those who lived more than two miles away did not reach the house of the librarian at the stated time they were to be allowed two hours' grace. Fines were levied on delinquent returners and if they became too dilatory a wagon was sent around to gather up the books.

This association passed out of existence after a time and the books were sold at auction. Its successor was the "Young Men's Library Association." Such groups were being formed in many towns about this time, but there were no similar libraries for young women. Whether or not they read the books after the young men brought them home the records do not show. This collection of books was kept in the brick schoolhouse in the center of the town and was wiped out when the building was destroyed by fire in 1852. But with Burts, Cooleys and Newells still in town, the library idea could not perish and it was revived two years later in connection with the Longmeadow Lyceum.

The broad and beautiful Longmeadow Street has been at different times the subject of many votes, showing how narrow has been its escape from the most serious encroachments by the public or by individuals. The present central section of well kept lawn was originally a long sand-drift and it is largely due to the efforts of Captain Calvin Burt over a period of many years that the soil was enriched and brought into thriving sod. The northern half of this section was occupied for many years by a row of shops and stores under forty-year leases. At the end of the term the leases were not renewed and the proprietors of the shops were not allowed to remain and acquire a right by occupancy. After 1795 no rights to build on the common were granted.

The name of Eleazer Williams is related to Longmeadow not only by his reputed relationship to the first pastor, Dr. Stephen Williams, but also by his early residence in the village for several years while he was acquiring an education. Eunice Williams, the minister's sister who remained with the Indians, was Eleazer's great-grandmother. His father, Thomas, was urged to send a son to Longmeadow to be educated, and John, another son, came along with Eleazer and was there for a time. But after his return to his own people he seemed satisfied to drop back into their way of living. Eleazer studied for a time with Reverend Mr. Hale, of Westhampton, reading Latin and Greek, and was anxious to learn Hebrew. A letter written by Pastor Storrs says:

"I have heard it objected to Eleazer that he appeared fickle, but who would rationally expect that an Indian would at once become steady. I have heard it said that he was assuming; this no one will think strange who considers how much he has been flattered and caressed by many of the first characters in New England. For some time past I must say that to me he appeared more stable, more meek, and in every respect more promising. His whole soul seems swallowed up in the idea of becoming a preacher of Christ among his own countrymen."

A strange story grew up and was believed by many that Eleazer Williams was really the son of Marie Antoinette, the "Lost Dauphin" of France. The strongest evidence of this seemed to be his looks,

for he was said to be strikingly Bourbon in feature. There were details of a De Joinville interview in the cabin of a western steamboat and there was in evidence a growing collection of royal relics. Eleazer in his later years, became very keenly alive to his own possible historical importance and brooded on it so long and intensely as to find it difficult to distinguish between the facts of memory and other people's fancies.

In early days there was an institution of which Longmeadow is not inclined to boast. Domestic slavery prevailed to a considerable extent and frequent mention is made in old documents of negro servants. They had their pew in the gallery of the old meetinghouse and in the burying ground their appointed place was the southeast corner. But as no monuments commemorated them, and their descendants have passed away, their history is ill preserved.

In "Marchant" Colton's day-book for 1769 we learn that Colton had a negro man named Jack and, after the merchant's death, Jack became somewhat uppish and in his grumblings one day muttered in the hearing of his mistress, the Widow Colton: "Isn't me as free as anybody?" "To be sure you are," she replied. "Go about your business." "Me will," said Jack, "if you turns me out." She, accordingly, led him to the door and with a shove of the hand sent him out of her door into the wide world of freedom. Jack used to come back and plead for restoration, but without avail, and he became a pauper citizen of Springfield and occupied a cabin on the east side of the town brook.

Merchant Colton, who became the richest man of the precinct, was orphaned at the age of seventeen and complained of his uncle Ephraim as being hard with him, so he set up for himself. He was allowed his own cows for a support and his negro servant, Tony, for a helpmate.

In 1719 Stephen Williams, then in the third year of his ministry, wrote: "This day I bought me a servant man. Some of my neighbors think it may be for the better; others think not." October, 1718: "I went to Deerfield and sold my boy Nicholas. He seemed very concerned; and surely I was grieved for him, yet I thought it would be for his benefit to be sold to a master that would keep him to business, as well as for my profit." Mention is also made at various times of Tom, Peter, Cato, Phyllis and others. April, 1754: "This



morning Tom behaved saucily and unbecomingly, so that we were forced to tie him up. Then he appeared penitent and I forgave him." In his prayers frequent and tender supplications are offered for the servants of the family.

It appears from the Williams' diary that his intimate friend, President Wheelock of Dartmouth College, owned at least four negroes.

Old-time customs were both good and bad. The people were shut in on themselves and their own community was their little world; they knew each other's affairs pretty thoroughly and there was abundant opportunity for the meddlesome. Hospitality was general and was both a virtue and a solace. The pastor set an example and he speaks of having twelve chance guests at his table one day, and during another seven arrivals to spend the night. The blazing fire of logs on the ample hearth sizzled and snapped and roared a cheery evening welcome. Pipes, long and short, hung in a handy place along with the tobacco-box. The straight-backed rush-bottomed chairs set back against the wall and the high-backed settles that beat back the draughts and reflected the ruddy glow invited to free and easy talk. There was no next room for the convenience of young lovers, but there were courting sticks prophetic of the telephone—long wooden tubes that could convey from lip to ear sweet and secret whispers.

The merry blast of the stage horn was a more stimulating sound than the shriek of the locomotive or the wild rush of automobiles. Flip irons were always ready on the tavern hearth and "tavern haunting" was one of the bad customs. Carousing all night was one way the young people had of amusing themselves.

The wood sleddings, when the woodpile at the parsonage began to vanish, were joyful occasions for the parson and he never forgot to make a note of them: "January 25, 1757. Neighbors sledded for me and showed a Good Humor. I rejoice at it. The Lord bless them that are out of humor and brought no wood." A selected load of hickory expressly for his study fire rejoiced the good man's heart still more. The "rate days" also were tests of character and feeling. In the great scarcity of money the rates were paid in grain, which the minister made into beef and pork to pay his debts.

It was usual for the spinners and the quilters to help the parson's family and there were repasts of cake and pies, and merry times. Likewise the reapers and mowers lent a hand when the grass and



grain of the "ministry land" were ripe; but the rum provided by the parson must be of good quality or there might be "uneasiness." The customs of that day looked toward mutual help. At every raising the community gathered with plenty of drink and great good cheer, sometimes "too" merry the parson thought. For a long time there was no appointed sexton. The neighbors dug and filled the grave and carried the bier. It was not the way of the old-time minister to have a definite vacation, but he indulged in long journeys election weeks and commencements, and when the Sabbath found him absent a deacon or some other member of the church would read a sermon.

The Sabbath Day was strictly kept, from sunset on Saturday to sunset on Sunday, except when infringed on in war times, and yet there was more or less of worldly conversation about the meeting-house doors before service and in the horse sheds and neighbors' houses at noon. The tything men also had to watch with considerable vigilance the boys and girls in the galleries.

Mr. Williams held frequent "catechisms" for the children; he met the young men in the schoolhouse for questioning and instruction and the young women by themselves; he held household meetings for prayer and repeated sermons in private houses for the benefit of invalids and aged people. A weekly lecture, set up by the ministers of six adjacent parishes, was for a long time largely attended.

In the early days of Longmeadow the men and women, boys and girls, were all workers if they wanted to have the best repute. Idlers and drunkards were rare exceptions. There was very little cash and trade was mostly by barter, the exchange being either of labor or produce. Agriculture was the foundation resource and the manufactures were generally homemade or carried on within the limits of the community. There were the great and the small spinning-wheel and the clacking looms and the darting shuttles, all making household music. There were the spinning and quilting bees, the candle-dippings, the fulling-mills, the cloth dressers and the dye tubs. Shoemakers wrought in little shops with their apprentices, or shouldered their packs and went from house to house shoeing each family by the day or week, after the tanners had prepared the hides. The tailors and tailoresses went about in like fashion when the homemade cloth was ready.

The boys shook the trees and picked up apples; the cider-mills crushed them and the stills made the brandy. Cabinetmakers produced

excellent furniture; the millers ground the corn and sawed the timber; coopers provided barrels and tubs; blacksmiths shod the horses; woodworkers and wheelwrights made the carts; the carpenters framed the houses; surveyors measured the lands; and there were masons, hatters, powder manufacturers, inkmakers, printers, brickmakers, net weavers, ropemakers, broom makers, and, indeed, all the handicrafts that were needed for the uses or comforts of those days.

Every farmer was something of a mechanic, or he could exchange his day's work or his farm products for the skilled labor of the village artisan. There were no middle men. Every householder, even the minister, killed his own beef and pork, and loaned or borrowed, as convenience suited. Longmeadow had less need of Boston or New Haven merchants than they had of her farmers to do their winter teaming, although in quiet times of peace large quantities of goods went round by water. The teamsters carried eight barrels of flour to a two-horse load and their charge for freight to Boston was about one dollar a hundred pounds.

Nor should the Longmeadow flatboatmen be forgotten. They belonged to the old days when the Connecticut River was whitened with the great sails of the flatboats, and merry during the summer season with the shouts and songs of the jovial watermen. Little attention was paid anywhere to tidiness of grounds or dwellings. The wood piles and chipyards before the unpainted houses, the rail fences and steaming barnyards that came to the front, the roaming swine and geese, the blowing sand that threatened the underpinning of the old meetinghouse gave no predictions of village improvement societies.

Longmeadow's fisheries were formerly a source of considerable profit and both salmon and shad were wonderfully plenty until the dams impeded them and the factories polluted the water. Almost every family in the early days salted down shad and it was the stipulation of hired men that they should not have a too great proportion of that food. Sometimes sturgeon to the size of three hundred pounds were seen leaping high out of the water. The April suns called out the nets for shad or sturgeon and they were spread full length on the village green and put in order.

In later years the fishing rights were divided between six proprietors, who either manned the boat themselves or let out their rights on shares. A haul would sometimes bring in four hundred shad. When

the boatmen, who worked on shares, massed their portion at evening on the beach, the fish were distributed in piles as equally as possible. Then one man would turn his back, and as another pointed to each pile with the cry "Who shall?" he would call out a name, and to the owner of the name would the pile belong. A big sturgeon might make a great commotion in a shad net, but by playing fast and loose was secured.

In what is called the town period of Longmeadow temperance was so vigorously championed that the town's nineteen cider mills and six brandy, gin and whiskey stills were vanquished. This was about 1830. Other innovations were the discarding of wood-sleddings for the minister, and doing without meadow gates, and the gates of the home commons. No more running at large was allowed the browsing cattle nor the swine and the geese—three cents fine for each wandering goose—and no more setting of fires in the woods was tolerated.

It has been claimed that the total impression made by Longmeadow village has always been one of quietness and peace, and a charming rural beauty.

Some recollections of a Longmeadow boyhood follow:

"My arrangements are never made to revisit the old place without the thrill of a boy's anticipation at returning home. As soon as the train, sweeping around the curve, glides on the Longmeadow stretch and the familiar landmarks are one after another passed, my childhood begins to come back with delightful vividness. Opposite the station, on the river bank, my heart beats quicker; for I recall one April day thirty-six years ago a little fellow with pockets that bulged with baseballs and hands clutching tight his cap lest it be lost. There he would have struggled hopelessly in the swollen river had not a brave man of the town periled his own life and saved mine. He was the old parish sexton, and I regret that he is not alive to know how gratefully I cherish the memory of his heroic deed."

Among other things that the speaker recalled was the old meeting-house, with its high pulpit at one end and the choir at the other, sustained by the bass viol, violin and flute.

"Earnest exhortations from the pulpit and copious drippings of liquified soot from long spans of stovepipe furnished



the spiritual and material droppings of the sanctuary. How delightfully I used to sleep there, if only I could get to my mother's end of the pew and lay my head on her friendly lap; what jolly excursions we made into the sanctuary spire to the great dismay of the swarming bats, when we boys climbed the winding stairway and out on the balcony, which commanded a rich view of mountain and meadow and quiet river. How eagerly did I watch for the crowing of the gilded cock—'the old Probabilities' of the village, before weather bureaus were invented—assured by gravest testimony that he *did* crow every time he heard another rooster crow!

"Shall we ever forget how we used to be gotten ready for examination by reciting, day after day, the same passages of English history and placing the same examples on the black-board? And when the great day came, how delighted our fathers and mothers were with our astonishing proficiency. But one luckless day a new minister came into the town and school, and after we had been put through our parrot-like performance as usual, took the questioning into his own hands. How dumb as oysters we suddenly became!

"Those were the days of the ferule code, the thrashings, the dunce cap, standing on one foot, holding the arm extended at a horizontal, or bending the body forward until the hand touched the floor, with an occasional stroke. Those were the days when, on Saturday night, I wished the western mountains were deep valleys, that the sun, going down, might not so soon interrupt my sport, and on Sunday night, that the valleys were high mountains that the Sabbath rigor might sooner end.

"Not unknown at that time were the tavern and the toddy stick; the horse racings, foot racings, and turkey shootings, which, with their accompaniments, lowered the morals and cheapened the social values of the community."

A "Thief Detecting Society" became necessary at one period, particularly because of a habit for stealing watermelons. The melons were extensively raised and of choice quality and the thieves were so alert it required a good deal of adroitness to catch them. One moonlit night a marauding party from Enfield had tied their horses



to the highway fence not far from an attractive watermelon patch. The Longmeadow detectives found the horses and fastened one of the forelegs of each to one of his hind legs with twine small enough not to be seen in the moonlight, but strong enough to hold, and the leader divided his forces, a part creeping round to the farther side of the watermelon lot and the rest hiding near the horses. When ready for the onset the detectives allowed the thieves time to throw their sacks across their horses' backs and mount and then rushed forth to enjoy the easy capture of the frantic riders and their stumbling nags.



"BACONSFIELD," OLDEST HOUSE NOW STANDING IN LONGMEADOW. Erected by Gad O. Bliss in 1720, it is now owned and occupied by George A. Bacon and family. A manuscript history of this place is in the Storrs Historical Collection in the Storrs Museum at Longmeadow.

Longmeadow was famous for its May "Breakfast Association," organized in 1869. It is a social festival and fair, enlisting the united efforts of the inhabitants, and especially of the younger portion, with the object of lending a helping hand in any parish or public emergency in need of financial aid. For several years it accumulated a fund for furnishing the new church, including the organ, and afterward was efficient in canceling the debt left at the completion of the new church.

It has raised large sums, clear of all expenses, by its annual celebrations and proved itself not only a remarkably attractive social occasion, but a well-managed business enterprise.

On October 17, 1883, Longmeadow celebrated her one hundredth birthday. On the exact site of the old meetinghouse had been pitched a large tent for the audience, with a smaller one adjoining it for the dinner. Merry groups of shouting boys opened the festivities with games on the green. The red coats of musicians brightened the scene. The steady inflow of omnibuses and private carriages, bicycles and railroad arrivals effectually woke the old street from its wonted quietude.

Many guests from distant places had arrived the day before, and as each hospitable home poured out its inmates, with a succession of East Longmeadow teams coming through the intervening woods, as in the Sabbath days of old, when the entire town worshipped together, the gathering throng filled the settees of the tent. Finally, the standing room, too, was filled, and the number who had been accommodated was nearly twenty-five hundred.

On a platform in front of the speakers' stand sat a band of eighteen skilled musicians in scarlet uniforms and with shining instruments. The natural dampness and possible chill of the earth floor in the tent was guarded against by a carpeting of soft hay, while the glow of the sun upon the canvas was just enough for genial warmth. The day was filled with a program of music and speeches, but the outstanding event was the "collation" at noon. A hundred waiters in companies of ten with lady captains served twenty-five hundred people in forty minutes. Some of the items of supplies were: Four hundred pounds of beef, ham and tongue; 4,000 rolls, 50 pounds of butter, 1,500 crullers, 50 pounds of coffee, 70 pounds of sugar, five barrels of pears and 300 pounds of grapes. Each family in town had been invited to furnish cake and there were 300 on hand.

A hotel proprietor, observing with amazement the success of the arrangements, said: "The man who organized the details of that collation could feed an army of ten thousand and not a soldier lose his rations."

The Richard Salter Storrs Library is located on Longmeadow Street, near the center of the town, and facing the green. In 1907 Sarah Storrs, a descendant of Longmeadow's second minister, Rev-



erend Richard Salter Storrs, died and willed to Longmeadow all of her real estate in the town, including the historic homestead and a money bequest, providing that certain citizens whom she specified should incorporate and erect a suitable building to house the library's collection of books. The new Richard Salter Storrs Library is one of the most beautiful buildings in Longmeadow today. The walls are of brick painted white, with a roof of black slate, green shutters and iron railings. It was designed by Smith and Bassette and is quite in harmony with its setting and the spirit of the community. It has 15,000 volumes and its circulation is about 40,000 a year.

The Longmeadow Museum had its beginning in the Longmeadow Historical Society, organized in 1899, under the leadership of Reverend Stephen G. Barnes. Its purpose is to stimulate an interest in Longmeadow history and to make a collection of documents, furniture and other articles illustrating early life in this neighborhood.

In 1911 the society purchased the furnishings of the Storrs family house and this has formed the nucleus of their historical collection. Through the interest and coöperation of the Storrs Library Association the society is now making its home in the ancestral Storrs parsonage. Among the many relics that are cherished is a pewter communion service of nine pieces which was given to the old First Church in 1737 by Nathaniel Bliss and used until a silver service was bought in 1819. There is also a curious old bureau that belonged to Abigail Davenport, an old gun which was used by Reverend John Williams at the Deerfield capture, and a "courting stick." This is a hollow stick about five feet long and the couple using it could sit a discreet distance apart before the fire with the other members of the family and yet carry on a conversation with each other which would not be heard by the rest.

The Longmeadow Historical Society had made and sold the "Longmeadow Plate" of blue Wedgewood and in December, 1912, published for one day only "The Town Crier," a newspaper which sold for fifty cents.

The new town hall of Longmeadow gracefully fits into its Colonial background and fittingly supplements the other public buildings. It is of handmade water-struck bricks over a steel frame and has concrete floors. It was designed after the style of Merchant Colton's residence and the doors have witches' crosses on the lower half. Semi-

circular walks and three-tiered broad brownstone steps quarried in the town lead to the doorway. The interior has pine panelled walls and wide fireplaces. It is furnished with trestle tables and ladder-back and Windsor chairs.

The old white church which was erected on the village green in 1767-68 was moved about 1875 to a portion of the burial ground directly east of the original church site. In 1933 it was completely renovated and restored to true Colonial lines and is the oldest church building in the county. The church program makes use of the community house for its educational and social program. This house was built by the church in 1921 and later sold to the town.

St. Mary's Roman Catholic parish built a new Gothic style church in 1931, which took the place of the old remodeled school building that had been used by them since 1870.

The first service of an Episcopalian group was held in a store in the Chaplin Building, but within six months a larger place had to be secured. In the summer of 1924 a part of the large edifice planned was erected and in 1930 foundations were laid for the complete church. St. Andrew's parish numbers about three hundred and seventy-five people and land has been given by the Bacon family for a parish house or rectory.

A group of Christian Scientists living in Longmeadow felt they were great enough in numbers and interest to hold services of their own, so in 1924 they effected an organization and secured an unoccupied house to meet in. In 1927 an addition was built on the south side of the house, so now the auditorium will seat two hundred and fifty people.

To further the interest of dramatic art the Longmeadow Players organized on October 7, 1925, and a great deal has been accomplished by them. A recent event was the drawing together of all the players' groups in the vicinity, which resulted in a permanent organization.

The first Boy Scout troop was formed in Longmeadow in 1915 and since then they have had an up and downhill career. Now there are several troops, eighty-one members in all, and they have a Boy Scout cabin on Provin Mountain. There are two Cub Packs for boys under twelve years of age, with sixty-two members.

The Longmeadow Maternal Association, the oldest woman's club in America, was founded in 1835 by thirty-one pioneer women who



banded themselves together "to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Meetings were to be spent in prayer, reading and conversation, and once a month parents were privileged to bring female children and male ones not over twelve years of age. The association has now a membership of over three hundred and any Longmeadow mother is eligible to join. It is active in all phases of community welfare.

The Longmeadow Woman's Club has grown from sixteen charter members in 1893, when it was organized, to a list of over two hun-



LONGMEADOW GOLF COURSE

dred at the present time. Its aim is to improve the moral, social and intellectual life of the community and it gives generously for local needs.

The Albert T. Wood Post of the American Legion, among other activities, cares for the flag on the Green at the Memorial Boulder and assists with the observance of Memorial Day. The Post's stand with regard to veterans' legislation was independent and creditable.

The Longmeadow Junior Horse Show was started in the spring of 1932 for the purpose of encouraging good horsemanship among the children of the town and vicinity, and it now is a member of the American Horse Show Association. An educational program has been carried on and a general knowledge class introduced which featured an examination on the points of the horse and correct names for parts of the bridle and saddle. Another class had to name the bones, muscles and tendons as well as the location of unsoundness in the horse. An outgrowth of the Junior Horse Show is the Connecticut Valley Riding Association, which has the added interest of developing bridle trails.

A feature which has been of assistance in attracting residents to Longmeadow is the Longmeadow Country Club, which was organized in 1922, and has a fine eighteen-hole golf course laid out by the famous golf architect, Donald Ross. The attractive buildings of a rambling English design are set on a carefully landscaped tract of two hundred and twenty-nine acres. A well-stocked trout lake is free to members of the club.

The present population of Longmeadow is over 5,000, scattered in many delightful residential groups, with Colony Hills at the north end, Greenwood Manor at the south end, and Glen Arden to the east. Other divisions are Wildwood, Green Haven, Laurel Manor and Riverview Knoll. Colony Hills and Glen Arden were laid out by the well-known landscape architects, Olmsted and Olmsted, of Boston, and are wonderful examples of modern landscape architecture.

Frank Crumit and his wife, Julia Sanderson, well known theatrical performers and radio stars, live in Longmeadow. Mr. Crumit is president of the Lambs' Club of New York City, an exclusive club for theatrical members. Julia Sanderson christened the Memorial Bridge in Springfield.

The Allen Guest House, built by Samuel Bliss in 1713, was used as a tavern from 1823 until 1852. When Zachary Taylor was elected President the Whigs celebrated with a fine supper there. On the third floor is a dance hall forty feet long with an arched ceiling. There are more than fifty other houses still standing in Longmeadow over one hundred years old.

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*Ludlow, Minnechaug or Berryland*

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## CHAPTER XIII

### *Ludlow, Minnechaug or Berryland*

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The history of the Ludlow region before the white men came is preserved only in tradition, but it is evident that some portions of these broad acres were favorite resorts of the red men. The names Minnechaug and Wallamanumps preserve the flavor of the aboriginal. The former name seems to have been used in the entire eastern region of Wilbraham and Ludlow. It signifies "Berryland." The latter word has been applied to the falls of the Chicopee at Ludlow Mills and Indian Orchard. In one place the discoloration of the rocks is said to have come from the frequent campfires of the Indians.

In other places, some in the extreme north, and all over the plain region, the frequency with which arrowheads are found and chippings of flint and other stones, show that another nation than ours used this region as an extensive armory. After the Indians destroyed Springfield in 1675 the warriors retreated eastward six miles and encamped on the peninsula in the south part of the town known as Indian Leap. Twenty-four smoldering campfires and some abandoned plunder were all the vestiges remaining the next morning. But the story of all stories concerning the Indians within the limits of the present town is the one about the leap of Roaring Thunder and his men in the time of King Philip's War. The account is legendary, but there is so fine a flavor of the aboriginal that it always has been popular among lovers of folklore. The story begins with a white man's reporting to nearby companions that a band of warriors was camping on the sequestered peninsula, lulled into quiet by the sound of the roaring fall of water tumbling scores of feet over the rocks.

Some say that on the point were spread the wigwams of the Indians and that quite a company of the red men made them their homes. It was also said that at this time the Indians had captured one of the women from Longmeadow and were pursued by the settlers

and finally discovered in their camp on the banks of the river. There, in the midst of their quiet and solitude, came the alarm from the white men following up their trail into the thicket whence there was no retreat. They had taught the white men the meaning of "no quarter" and could expect only retaliation. The one way of escape that presented itself was into the jaws of death, but the painted red men did not hesitate. At once they dashed on toward the brink of the fearful precipice, whence they leaped directly into the angry stream.

Roaring Thunder is said to have watched while each of his company dashed over into the wild waters and onto the ragged rocks, and then taking his child high in his arms and casting one glance back on the wigwam homes, he followed the rest into the rushing river. The pursuant foes looked wonderingly over the jutting sandstone walls and saw just one living redskin, and he was disappearing among the great forest trees that skirted the other shore.

About 1748, Abel Bliss, of Wilbraham, and his son, Oliver, collected in the town of Ludlow and south part of Belchertown a sufficient quantity of pine to make two hundred barrels of tar and sold it for five dollars a barrel. With the proceeds Bliss built a fine dwellinghouse in Wilbraham, which was the envy of all the region. In 1751 the family of Joseph Miller came, braving the terrors and real dangers of a fourteen-mile journey into the forest, away up the Chicopee River. The friends in their former home at West Springfield mourned them as dead, and tradition states that a funeral sermon was preached over their departure.

After this the coming of others was frequent and, in 1774, there were two or three hundred inhabitants. About 1770 Jonathan Burr moved in ox-carts from Connecticut and settled near the mountains. Two years later Joel Willey came to Miller Corner. Isaac Brewer, Jr., a young man from Wilbraham, who had cast furtive glances toward the developing charms of Captain Joseph Miller's daughter and had braved the terrors of ford and ferry and wilderness that he might visit there, became more and more enamored until her graces and her father's lands won him from his boyhood home for life. The happy young couple settled where the same musical ripple of the Chicopee delighted them as had charmed the girlhood of the bride. Other families made homes in various places and Ezekiel Squires built the first gristmill.

The region thus peopled must have been very wild. The roads in this period were hardly laid out for travel and no dams obstructed the onward flowing of the Chicopee River, and no bridges spanned its stream for the convenience of the townspeople. The grand highways of travel, then as now, were outside the confines of the town. The southeasterly trail of the red man went through wild Wilbraham Gap, as that of the white man must sooner or later, while the "Great Bay Road" wound its way over plains and through passes just across the river to the south.

The surface of the land was in no desirable condition. Where now are blooming fields were then malarious bogs and sunken quagmires. The ponds caught the blue of heaven, but their approaches were swamps and their shores were strewn with decayed logs and underbrush. The region was infested with wolves and bears, while fleet-footed deer browsed confidently on the mountain foliage. Into such a region as this came the hardy adventurers from various other towns, until a goodly settlement was made.

Where these people attended church is left to conjecture. The Miller Corner people would naturally go southward to listen to the excellent sermons of Reverend Noah Mirick. The other people from the northwest part most likely sought the blind trail across the wooded plain, following the blazed trees until the center of Springfield was reached. There could have been no unity between the various parts of the town for a while, but presently neighborhoods were formed for mutual defense and sociability. As time went on people began to tire of this condition and wanted to have a town of their own. The waters of the Chicopee were often so swollen they could not be crossed and the rude paths so wet or rough or covered with snow that traveling on them was apt to be disagreeable. They wanted a church and a minister and a place to gather which belonged to them.

Thomas Hutchinson was Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony when the inhabitants of Stony Hill in Springfield applied for a town charter. He had fallen on troublous times. There were mutterings, frequent and painfully apparent, against the ruling power; men had even dared to question the right of the King to control their actions or levy taxes. Some had declared that the people of the New World could take care of themselves and spend their own revenues. One of the measures adopted by England for the control of the American



subjects was the reduction of the representative power, and as a means of safety it was at length decided to give further applicants for town charters all rights save that of representation, calling the groups districts instead of towns.

At precisely this juncture in affairs did the Stony Hill settlers send in their petition for incorporation and it was granted, making them into a separate district with the name of Ludlow.

Prior to 1774 the region was called Mineachogue, Outward Commons, the Cow Pasture and Stony Hill. The origin of the name of Ludlow has never been satisfactorily settled. One theory is that it was named for Sir Edmund Ludlow, an ardent Republican living in England at the time of the protectorate. He won a warm place in the esteem of all true patriots by twice standing firmly against the ruling power in the interests of Republicanism. Another suggested origin of the name is from Roger Ludlow, a prominent citizen of Roxbury, who drew up a code of laws long known as Ludlow's code, or it may have been named after the town of Ludlow in Shropshire County, England.

The warrants were posted for the first district meeting and the sixteenth of March, 1774, was eagerly awaited. At an early hour came the proud citizens, from the margin of Higher Brook and its tributaries, from the edge of Shingle Swamp northward, and Bear Swamp eastward; on foot and on horseback came the men and boys until the kitchen of Abner Hitchcock was well filled. Moses Bliss, of Springfield, was chosen moderator and other officers, including fence-viewers, tithingmen, hog-reeves and deer-reeves were duly elected, twenty-four in all.

About a month after the first district meeting the people met again at the same place and voted to hire Pelatiah Chapin to preach. With an eye to order as well as sanctuary privileges, they, in the next breath, voted that swine should be allowed to run at large, yoked and with a ring in the nose. In June three men were chosen to find the center of the district in order that the location of the meetinghouse should be fixed. At a meeting in October of that year there occurred the first official measure bearing on the coming struggle with the Mother Country. The call to a meeting of all the province had gone out to every town and district, asking for the appointment of one or more delegates from each corporate body to a Provincial Congress



to be held at Concord. Joseph Miller was selected to go and went not only to this but to the succeeding session at Salem and to another at Cambridge and to another at Watertown the next May. He was voted the sum of eleven pounds, thirteen shillings and twopence for his expenses and also two shillings per day for thirty days while attending the several Congresses.

Ludlow may well be proud of her record in the Revolution. One in seven of her inhabitants left for a longer or a briefer time to engage in the fray. The records make evident the fact that every burden imposed was borne and every tax paid. In the apportionment of coats for soldiers in the service in 1775, Ludlow was to "find" twenty-three, and no doubt did. Twelve pounds annual bounty for two years was offered to volunteers in 1777, while a bounty of thirty pounds was deemed necessary two years later. The patriotism of the people in this western part of the State was not a whit behind that of their brethren in the eastern counties. All were ready to make the greatest sacrifices for the common safety. Stockings and shoes had to be made in the different families for the soldiers, for these articles could not be bought in one place as now, and blankets in many instances were taken from the beds then in use. Tax followed tax for seven long years, until nothing seemed left but a depreciated paper currency. The worthlessness of this, though it was nearly all they had, some of the votes on the records made at that time will show. One was to raise the sum of \$11,500 to buy grain to pay the three and six months' soldiers in addition to their stated wages, and another to raise \$32,000 to buy beef for the State.

The war ended and peace and prosperity came once more. The people, as might be expected, turned their attention again especially to the erection of their long desired sanctuary. Accordingly, in town meeting it was voted "that Deacon Nathan Smith of Granby, Deacon Nash of South Hadley and Deacon John Hitchcock of Wilbraham be a committee to set the stake for the meetinghouse." Then the work went forward as fast as they were able to collect and prepare the material. At length the foundations were laid and almost a forest of heavy hewn timber covered the ground.

In October, 1783, a town meeting at the stake voted that the building committee procure a sufficient quantity of men for raising the meetinghouse frame. This was the only business done at the meeting,

so far as the record goes, and no doubt was the last requisite step toward a successful end. A raising in those days was an eventful occurrence, especially if a public building, calling together whole communities, the men and boys to lift the heavy timbers by broadsides, and the women and girls to spread the tables for the unusual feast. It was a great day for the people of the town when the gigantic frame of that ancient sanctuary was lifted onto its foundations. Indeed, two days were consumed before the last timber went into its place, though scores of strong-armed men came in from the towns around and cheerfully contributed their aid. Then, at a given signal from the master workman, there was a tossing of hats into the air and a shout both loud and long rang out, followed by a round of rum. On account of poverty the meetinghouse remained unfinished within for several years and for some time its only pulpit was a carpenter's bench and its pews rough planks stretched from one block to another. But afterward, as the people prospered, a real pulpit was built, and how wonderful it was, perched high up like an eagle's nest. The deacons' seat was a little lower down in front, where grave men sat to watch the flock. As there were no means for warming the church each family took to meeting with them their little box-like stove for the women's feet, while the men sat and thumped their heels to force away the winter's cold.

Reverend Antipas Steward, the first settled pastor, was ordained in November, 1793, but before that time the town had a number of other preachers, none of whom had stayed very long. Perhaps this could partly be accounted for by the fact that there was no meetinghouse and the services were often held in barns. One of these early preachers was the afterward notorious Stephen Burroughs, who in 1783 or 1784 preached his first sermon in the town, using the assumed name of Davis. After mentioning the chain of circumstances leading to his determination to preach and describing his clothing, "which consisted of a light gray coat with silverplated buttons, green vest and red velvet breeches," Burroughs goes on thus:

"Hearing of a place called Ludlow, not far distant, where they were destitute of a clergyman, I bent my course that way, it being Saturday and I intended to preach the next day if I proved successful. I arrived about noon and put up at the house of a man named Fuller, whom I found to be a leading

man in their religious society. I introduced myself as a clergyman and he gave me an invitation to spend the Sabbath and preach. I retired to rest at the usual time and composed my mind to consider what was to be done under the present circumstances. People had been notified that a sermon would be delivered, but this business I never had attempted. These considerations made so dismal an appearance that I at once concluded to get up, take my horse privately out of the stable and depart, rather than run the risk of the dangers which were before me. But on more mature reflection I found the hard hand of necessity compelled me to stay and the next morning with Bible and psalm book under my arm I ascended the pulpit, finding a stare of universal surprise at my gay dress. I went through the exercises of the forenoon without any difficulty and also those of the afternoon. Then being informed they did not agree to hire me any longer, I found my business here at an end and the next morning set out for Palmer."

The Reverend Steward's salary was to be sixty pounds, with thirty cords of wood annually, and it was a proud day for Ludlow when it had a pastor of its own. Mr. Steward was a small man and very near-sighted, so that he had to hold the manuscript close to his eyes while reading. Gad Lyon led the singing, standing in front of the minister and "lining out" the psalms of easy meter. Mr. Steward possessed a stentorian voice and Mr. Lyon was similarly blessed, so that irreverent auditors used to say that parson and chorister vied with each other to see who could make the most noise. The minister, with his powdered locks and three-cornered hat would visit the homes and the schools encouraging the children by a pat on the head and an exhortation to be good, or warning them with the statement that if they lied he would find it out, though miles away. At the time Mr. Steward's ministry began there were fifteen church members, but that number decreased rather than increased in the next few years. The labors of the reverend gentleman seem to have lacked appreciation before the century closed, for the town voted that they were willing he should be "disconnected from the people in this place, if he should be willing himself." Finally, the town, after several votes, agreed to



make him a donation of eighty pounds on condition that he should leave in June and draw no more salary, though they assured him of their disposition "to cultivate peace, love and concord among themselves, and a good understanding toward their minister."

In December, 1779, two young men, Jedediah Paine and Solomon Olds, started on Saturday to go to Springfield on business, driving an ox-team. They were delayed there until late and when they reached the fording place on the way home the shadows of night had gathered about the stream, rendering the crossing dangerous. They tarried there until morning light and then by its aid finished their journey. But the Sabbath law was broken and an eye witness living near the ford complained of them and carried the case to the county magistrate at Northampton. They were fined and returned homeward on Christmas Day. While coming through South Hadley they undertook to cross a pond on new ice, but were so unfortunate as to lose their lives in the attempt. There was great lamentation in Ludlow over the melancholy event and some deemed it a judgment of God. There was also great indignation felt against the informant, who received half the fees.

In 1787 came the events of Shays' Rebellion, in which Ludlow had its share, furnishing recruits for both sides, and one Ludlow man was killed in South Hadley by a chance shot from a house. Shays came into town from Ludlow City, quartering his troops at Fuller's Tavern. On his inglorious defeat he retreated to Ludlow and thence northward at a high rate of speed.

The first burial in the cemetery by the Congregational Church was that of a child run over by a cart in 1786, but it was not until six years later that the selectmen were instructed by vote of the town to procure a bier and keep it in the meetinghouse.

A pound, thirty feet square, was built in 1776, but sixteen years later it had fallen into decay and a new one was constructed in a different place of white oak, the timber of the old one being ordered sold. The first reference to guide boards is in 1795, when it needed a committee of nine to erect "way-posts."

A highway from the east cemetery to Miller Corner was projected in 1784 and the same year one across Cedar Swamp. Land damages for road making were at one time one shilling per square rod. In 1793 a petition was sent the county officers to lay out a stretch in



Ludlow as part of a line which shall "commode the travil from the eastern part of Connecticut to Dartmouth College in New Hampshire."

At the close of this period the deer, wolves and bears must have been mostly driven away, but for a while they were doubtless common. One day a man found a large bear and two cubs. He killed one of the cubs, but the old bear pursued him, driving him to a precipitous rock nearby, where he took refuge. Foiled in her attempt to avenge the death of her young, she kept guard of the place nearly a whole night, springing frequently from the ground up the sides of the rock. But those days have passed away and with them the beasts which infested the region.

There is still shown in town a conch shell used to call the "men-folks" in from the fields the resonant tones of which are said to have been heard three full miles.

In 1813 war was raging with Great Britain and the people were in a state of excitement. All on the seaboard became nervous and flocked inland. Among these refugees from the dangers of the war with England was a small bright-eyed man from Provincetown on Cape Cod. As there was no minister in town he conducted worship on the fast day proclaimed by President Madison, and as a result, so pleased were the people with the sermon, Alexander McClean was hired to preach and Ludlow continued to be his home. "In 1814 there was a great mortality in the town and under the ministrations of Mr. McLean and some evangelists a powerful awakening followed, more extensive than was ever known before."

For some time there had been in Ludlow a few Methodists and an occasional Methodist preacher, but in August, 1802, occurred a notable event in the history of the movement, what is called an "old-fashioned quarterly meeting." The house appointed was too small and was enlarged for the occasion by the addition of a rude shed covered with brush and tree branches. When the preparations were complete crowds assembled, some coming from as far away as Connecticut. The townspeople were out in force to see the first real demonstration here of what some have been pleased to call "Christianity in earnest." A sermon by the presiding elder, perhaps his grandest effort, made the occasion memorable to all. From this time on were maintained services for some years without much omission. The earliest itinerant preachers were not men of eminent scholastic

attainments and hence found themselves sometimes at a disadvantage when before many of the New England people. Advantage would frequently be taken of their lack of education by pedantic clergymen of other denominations. Not always, however, did the itinerant come out second best, as is illustrated in the anecdote of Jesse Lee. An orthodox minister addressed him in Greek and he replied in Low Dutch, much to the discomfiture of his antagonist, who supposed the response was Hebrew. The time came, however, when a graduate of Brown University went into the Methodist itinerancy and the new movement received a dignity not before obtained. Wilbur Fisk, pious, learned, eloquent and earnest brought his private school to the neighboring town of Wilbraham and from there went into the surrounding towns to preach. Dr. Fisk was not long in winning the confidence of the people and soon there was a demand for a church organization and a house of worship. Captain Joseph Miller furnished the timber and Reverend Isaac Jennison, preacher, architect and boss carpenter, went with the old gentleman and his little grandson to select the tall straight pines for the sills and posts. The ax and the adze were made to fly by none more dexterously than by Parson Jennison, the patient oxen and sturdy drivers conducted the logs to the mill, and soon the hand of Jennison had framed the massive timbers. The crowd which came to that raising saw every stick take its place in order and no rum to help either, thanks to the advance in temperance principles in half a century. The minister, tall in stature, is said to have clapboarded the gable ends of the house to the ridgepole without resort to any staging. At last the work was done and the building ready for dedication on July 5, 1828.

In the meantime the old church seemed to be gradually succumbing to wind and weather and occasionally pressing a claim for repairs with infrequent success. In 1805 glass for the windows and wooden steps were needed. The steps probably were never painted, for some twenty years later steps were again needed, and some who had found it necessary to use an umbrella in church asserted that the roof needed patching. Consequently a solemn vote was taken to stop the "leaks in the roof, if there be any." One year later, the meetinghouse having been painted in the meantime, a committee of three were instructed to install a stove, the expense to be borne by individuals. The horse sheds were built in 1814. Previous to that time such horses as could

not be sheltered in neighboring barns during services stood shivering long hours out in the open, covered by a home-tanned cowhide or an old bed quilt. Parties erecting the horse sheds bid for choice of lot, under the direction of the selectmen, and the open bents in the sheds wide enough for one or two teams were then handed down in the family as inheritances. Each man was expected to keep his own part of the sheds in repair, with the final result a hodge podge of good boarding and decay.

It became necessary in 1805 to fence, with posts and rails and half-wall, the yard by the church, and twenty years later the work needed doing over again. Simon Pease, the wit of the town, bid off the repairs to the center yard at the sum of five cents, evidently to postpone the work until the town would do it with thoroughness. In 1823 the town appropriated thirty dollars for a hearse. Before this time the dead were borne on biers to the grave, sometimes a journey of many miles, the bearers working in relays. A hearsehouse was erected two years later. About this time a proposition to move all the bodies interred in the graveyard was scornfully rejected.

Military organizations probably existed in town during most of its history. In 1808 a goodly number went to a general muster at Old Hadley, but were unsuccessful in getting their expenses paid by the town. The famous Horse Company included recruits from four towns, Springfield, Longmeadow and Wilbraham joining Ludlow. The full number in the company was about forty and the place of drill and muster was usually the Five Mile House, east of Springfield village. When the War of 1812 broke out this company was in fine order. At drill one day the captain formed them into line and requested all who would volunteer as minute men for the national service to step forward a certain number of paces. Not a man started in obedience to this sudden request until the captain himself advanced to the assigned place, then a large number of the company followed his example, among whom were all the Ludlow men but two, and one of those furnished a substitute.

Facts are facts, however, and it must be recorded that two of these men deserted from the ranks and concealed themselves at their homes. One narrowly escaped capture by concealment for days inside a large stone chimney then standing in the southwest part of the town and by a kindly warning from a female friend who knew officers were on his



trail. The other was not so fortunate. Taken prisoner, he was court-martialed and sentenced to be shot. The coffin was produced and he was bound and made to kneel on it. The soldiers drawn up to execute the military law included his own brother-in-law. But just as the fatal shot was about to send him to eternity a reprieve was granted and pardon eventually obtained. Among the souvenirs of these days of war is a revenue receipt for a tax of one dollar paid "for and upon a 4 wheel carriage called a waggon and the harness used therefor."

Many families lived in log cabins in the early days, but culture was appreciated as is evidenced by a vote of 1804, when the town appropriated twenty-five dollars "to the present singers, on condition they sing well and still continue to sing to the Edification of the inhabitants of said Town."

When the county of Hampden was formed in 1812 it was a great convenience to Ludlow people, whose distance to the county seat was lessened one-half. Another convenience was the post-office at Put's Bridge, established about three years later. The mail route for a while was through the town from north to south, a man with drawn pistols carrying the precious bag. In 1841 highway labor was paid sixty-seven cents a day in the spring and fifty cents in the fall. As late as 1820 good potatoes brought ten cents a bushel, and yet so far from plenty were they that a man who had a half hogshead of them and another who had four barrels were the wonder of the town.

A thrilling incident in Ludlow history concerned the supposed Annibal murder. In 1817 John Annibal went from Belchertown to Connecticut to peddle wagons. On his return he was seen to enter Ludlow about sundown. Afterward his horse with bridle cut was seen in Granby, his portmanteau and saddle were found in another place and blood was discovered in the road between the two places. Great excitement prevailed as everyone thought he had been murdered. An old woman who told fortunes was consulted. She said he had been killed by a one-eyed man, living in a gambrel-roofed house, where three roads met. The house which answered the description was searched in the absence of the family, but not the slightest trace of the missing man was found. Then a pond was drained, which necessitated digging twenty-five feet deep at one point. While the



digging was going on bonfires were kept burning around the pond and sentinels with loaded muskets guarded the spot. When the ditch was completed on Sabbath Day the water was drawn off in the presence of a thousand people. A line of men reaching from one side of the pond to the other, holding each other's hands, waded through the soft mud, but no trace of the missing one was found. A smaller pond nearby was emptied by carrying the water over a hill in pails, but with no result. Many then began to adopt another theory than murder as the man had debts he did not wish to pay and marital relations not of the best. A possible sequel to the mystery was the finding of a skull years later at one of the points where suspicion had rested.

Before the opening of the century only the most primitive modes of crossing the Chicopee River were employed, such as "riding-places" or fords. But later bridge after bridge was built in various places, only to fall into disrepair or be swept away in a spring flood. If an individual built a bridge he was entitled to the tolls taken in for crossing. The Jenksville bridge was dedicated in 1823 "to the protection of Almighty God and the use of men." The famous Cooley Bridge turned an angle on an abutment in midstream. It was a covered bridge and one through which no one could see. Its height must have been good, for once some camels passed through. They came in the night, but the boys of the village heard of their coming and one section of the bridge was illuminated. The camels had to stop at the tollhouse at the south end of the bridge while a discussion was held over the rate as such beasts were not on the list. So the boys had a good chance to look at the rare animals.

Very early in the century Rufus Calkins had a little chair shop on Higher Brook, where he made many of the old chairs still to be seen in some of the homes. At one time he also adjusted a spindle by means of which he could spin flax or wool and this was the first manufacturing of the kind in town. On one mill privilege was a little fulling-mill and not far away a potash plant. A sawmill was at the foot of Burying Ground Hill and a sash and blind shop a few rods above. Ludlow City at one time had a distillery and tar kilns were set up in several places. The once famous Ludlow Glass Works consisted of a small building in which were ponderous furnaces. Their main output was green glass bottles. A shop for the manufacture of scythes turned out some of the best in the region.

At one place on the Chicopee River the water descends along a narrow, rocky channel forty-two feet in a distance of a hundred rods, and less than a mile distant is a fall of sixty-three feet from the top of the dam to the still water below. Here was started, in 1812, nearly the first manufacturing business in the county. At one time the company operating here owned 1,200 acres of land. The first work consisted in preparing yarn and warp, which were woven by people in the region about. Gradually the business grew, additional buildings were erected and the first looms were set up in 1823, weaving sheeting of various widths up to one yard.

With the development of the manufacturing interest at Jenksville new life came to Ludlow. Every farm increased in value as the factories developed. Every article produced was worth money. It no longer paid to team lumber to Willimansett for fifty cents on a thousand, for the logs were worth more as fuel. The cattle became too valuable to send roaming at large over the common lands, for it was worth while to feed them well and so get heavier beef. The factories were enlarged several times, each new part being dedicated by religious services. Tenements for the workers were erected from time to time and in 1837 ten thousand spindles were turning. Nearly three hundred people were employed, two-thirds of whom were women.

In 1840 the first building at the upper privilege was erected and used for making gun barrels for the United States Government. Later cotton machinery was made there. The growth of the mills in Ludlow brought in new people and the life of the manufacturing village changed greatly. One who resided in Jenksville about this time wrote as follows:

"As you pass the gun shops (on Sunday) some of the workmen would be busy. Nearby would be a collection of boys playing ball. A little farther on are as happy a set as the brown jug could possibly make them. I have known a large field of rye to be harvested on the Sabbath Day. These immoralities did not extend outside of the village."

There was also some minor manufacturing during these years. Fisk's mill at Ludlow City made a durable and beautiful woolen fabric and carded fleeces from the farms. Another mill turned out

forks and rakes. Meantime the affairs of the Springfield Manufacturing Company, which owned the big mills, went on with apparent prosperity and people were glad to invest their money with them. Once in a while creditors were asked to accept company notes, but the crisis came suddenly in 1848, when a failure was announced. Many a person lost all he had and it was a bad year for Ludlow. The town appropriations for the next year fell fourteen per cent. The prosperity of the town and the welfare of the churches have been closely interlinked and the latter felt the failure of the manufacturing company deeply, but soon were on their way upward again. The Reverend Franklin Fisk did some good work in the Methodist Society. One innholder took his liquors to the street, poured them out and renounced his life of sin. Later the Wesleyan Praying Band of Springfield rendered efficient service in special religious work. This church suffered a severe loss of membership in the Rebellion.

The first Ludlow Manufacturing Company followed the firm of Wood and Merritt, which had the mills up to 1856. They manufactured jute goods and wadding. Later there was the Ludlow Mills Company and then another Ludlow Manufacturing Company, which turned out "gunny" bagging, plain and figured crash, hardware twines and linen warps. They had connected with the mills thirty houses and a church, besides barns and sheds. The waterpower was estimated at over twenty-five hundred horsepower, only a small portion of which was in use.

After the financial failure at Jenksville in 1848 neither religious society was in a very good condition. The Methodists were left high and dry on a shoal of an eighteen-hundred dollar debt and finally the building was sold and moved to Warren, where it serves for the same denomination.

Roads and bridges received much attention during this period. The highway across Cedar Swamp was ever in need of repair and iron bridges replaced wooden ones. Red Bridge, destined to hold its name for many years, whether red or not, was thoroughly overhauled in 1873. The opening of the Western Railroad, now known as the Boston and Albany, was of much interest to the town and some value. The Springfield, Athol and Northeastern failed to secure town aid and passed only through the outskirts of the township. The construction of this railroad required another bridge across the Chicopee,



spanning the stream at Indian Leap, where the new aqueduct for the city of Springfield also crossed.

There were few towns more active than Ludlow during the Rebellion and none more loyal. April 27, 1861, the citizens appropriated two thousand dollars for bounty to those who would enlist and the next year a hundred dollars was offered to each of seventeen men who were called for. Meeting after meeting was held, keeping the interest red hot. One hundred and nine men are listed as in the Civil War from Ludlow, and of these sixteen went out and never came back. To these a memorial was dedicated in the summer of 1867.

In the year 1873 Springfield started work on the Cherry Valley Reservoir to add to its water supply and Ludlow brooks were diverted into an aqueduct leading to that city. The erection of a dam caused a good deal of worry to the people living below it, as the catastrophe at Williamsburg, when the Mill River Dam gave way, was fresh in their minds. The first pipe line followed the highway and had branches a mile or so apart for flushing out the main line. These played a part in the rescue of James Hancock, a superintendent, who entered the big pipe at one time to make some repairs. The water had been properly drained out before he went in, but there was a leak in the outer gate and an assistant was horrified to discover presently that there was three feet of water against the inner gate. To open the gate meant washing Hancock fatally on to Springfield and the bewildered assistant ran down the main street to the Center to spread the news. Bells were rung and the people gathered and discussed plans of rescue. Men were ready to dig, but could not decide where. At last one man had the bright idea of calling to the superintendent through the side branches. The second one tried met with a response from the imprisoned man and showed him very much alive and able to use vigorous language. The idea of letting the water out a little at a time was suggested by somebody and Jim was warned. Through the side pipe his rescuers kept in touch with him, asking: "Can you stand to have a little more let out?" and when the flume was finally drained Jim made his way back out of the pipe, vociferously condemning nobody in particular, but thanking the men for his rescue.

At the Ludlow centennial in 1874 one toast introduced was: "Our mother, boasting of riches and independence, must yet ask a drink of water from her child." Charles O. Chapin, chairman of the



board of water commissioners in Springfield, made a pleasant speech in response, which helped smooth the ruffled feelings of those who claimed the larger place was not fair to the smaller, and ended with the wish that "the record of all differences may be written only in water."

Of the many distinguished citizens, Ludlow has produced two who stand out from the rest. They are Chester W. Chapin and Gordon M. Fisk. Mr. Chapin, though born in Ludlow, was a descendant of the well-known Chicopee Chapin family and attended the district school there, later going to the academy at Westfield. After a short period of keeping bar, managing a store and building mills, he became interested in stage lines in the Connecticut valley. From that profitable business it seemed a natural step to steamboats and railroads, where he was again successful. In 1855 he went to England and negotiated a loan of half a million dollars for improvements on the Western Road, of which he was president, and which later was consolidated into the Boston and Albany. Other interests included the Collins Paper Company, the Agawam Canal Company and the Chapin Banking and Trust Company of Springfield. Mr. Chapin was naturally prudent and conservative, but quick to grasp the need of a new development. It was a natural thing that his crowning honor was to represent his district at Washington.

Mr. Fisk, one of seven sons in the family, was named after a son of Dr. Aaron Miller, who accompanied the name with a gift of three sheep. The district school, with Dr. Johnson's dictionary and the Westminster catechism furnished his schooling. His life work started at the age of twenty-one with the buying of an old printing press in Enfield, and in 1850 he issued the first number of the Palmer "Journal," which he continued for many years. Mr. Fisk was State Senator for two years and held many public offices of various kinds.

Recent years in Ludlow have been years of growth in many ways. Because of the rapidly increasing school population a new schoolhouse was built at East Street in 1923 and an addition to the high school in 1927. About the same time the St. Jean de Baptist Church erected a parochial school to accommodate three hundred pupils. In the last fifteen years four of the principal highways of the town, East and West streets, Belchertown Road and Miller Street, have been paved and utilized as State roads.

Ludlow celebrated the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its incorporation as a district in 1924. The exercises covered a three-day period, with old-home day features, appropriate speeches and a fine historical pageant.

An unusual civic accomplishment was the establishment of a town forest in 1925. There are now one hundred and fifteen acres completely planted and, in time, it will be a financial asset to the town.

The Stevens Memorial Building is a clubhouse for operatives of the mills, which fills a great need, and is in almost constant use. Connected with it is a fine athletic field, with a cinder track, a wading pool and a playground for children. The Ludlow Country Club was founded in 1924 and now has a fine clubhouse and an eighteen-hole golf course.

The large number of voters in the town has made it increasingly hard in late years to function under the old form of town meeting, so in 1930 the representative form of town government was adopted. The present population numbers 8,569. The following year the steel bridge which spanned the Chicopee River at the entrance to Ludlow village was replaced by a modern bridge.

Ludlow has a small hospital which was established in 1907 and remodeled to make more room for beds in 1934.

Industrially, the town has seen considerable change. The Ludlow Manufacturing Associates purchased, in 1928, the National Net and Twine Company of Moodus, Connecticut; the Smith and Dore plant of Andover, Massachusetts; and the mills of the J. B. Barbour Sons, at Allentown, Pennsylvania, and Paterson, New Jersey. These plants were sold and the machinery moved to Ludlow, where the manufacture of fish nets and linen threads is now carried on. In 1934 the Ludlow Manufacturing Associates demolished Mills 5 and 6 and the following year Mills 1, 2 and 3, the machine shop, the service building and the main office were torn down.

During the World War four hundred and fifteen men from Ludlow were enlisted in the American Army or with other armies of the Allied forces.

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*Monson and Its Early Woolen Mills*

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## CHAPTER XIV

### *Monson and Its Early Woolen Mills*

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The first house erected in Monson was built by Richard Fellows, of Springfield, about 1658, and was used as a tavern. At that time it was the only house between Springfield and Brookfield. Fellows petitioned the General Court to grant him two hundred acres on the Chicopee River, promising to furnish lodgings and provisions for both man and horse, "with beer, wine and strong liquors." He received the grant on condition that the house be built within one year and maintained for seven years. Landlord Fellows made a good start, but for fear of the Indians abandoned the place within a year or two, burying his tools when he left, no doubt intending to return when the danger was over. These tools were plowed up eighty years later by Captain James Merrick. The tavern stood on the north side of the Bay Path and on the east side of Chicopee Brook.

This first attempt at filling in the long empty space between Brookfield and Springfield having failed, the General Court, in 1701, appointed Colonel John Pynchon and four other Springfield men to lay out a new township eight miles square on the east boundary of Springfield. After three times visiting the locality before they could decide where to lay the town plot, East Hill, later called Grout's Hill, was chosen and a road four rods wide laid out from the Connecticut line northward. Thirteen grants were immediately made on this road, but they all lapsed, probably owing to the French and Indian wars.

Monson was originally a favorite hunting ground of the Indians and a great many arrowheads have been picked up on the hills and a stone mortar in which they ground their corn has been found. Some years ago the remains of an Indian, as was supposed, were dug up in the valley south of the Chicopee River. He was of large size, buried in a sitting position, with a rusty gun and a bottle of liquor beside him.

It was over fifty years after Fellows abandoned his tavern that Robert Olds, of Springfield, became the first permanent settler of Monson by taking up the grant next to and south of the one held by Fellows.

Monson was at first a part of Brimfield, and when it became a town in 1731, ten of its eighty-four proprietors were located within the limits of the present town of Monson. Settlers came in fairly rapidly and when Monson was incorporated as a district in April, 1760, there were forty-nine families already making homes there. Governor Pownall, of Massachusetts, bestowed the name in honor of his friend, who was president of the British board of trade at the time. It is because of Admiral William Monson's insistence that the ships of friendly nations strike their flags in passing, a custom which has been adopted by the world's merchant marine and even pleasure craft in domestic waters. The first district meeting was called by Captain John Sherman, who was the physician, school teacher, town clerk and justice of the peace of Brimfield, and was held at the house of Samuel King. The necessary officers were elected and a day of fasting and prayer appointed. Among the first acts of the new district was one to arrange for regular preaching services and they began to hear candidates in preparation for selecting a settled minister. One of these candidates was Simeon Strong, afterward one of the judges of the Supreme Court of the United States. At first the Sabbath worship was conducted in private houses, but on June 23, 1762, a meetinghouse was sufficiently built so that the ordaining exercises of the first pastor, Reverend Abishai Sabin, could be held there. The site was purchased from Colonel Jonathan Dwight, of Springfield, and Simeon Dwight, of Warren (then Western), and in order to raise the necessary money the General Court allowed the town to assess a tax of two pence an acre on all the land in the district for two years. The church was a plain, rectangular, barn-like structure, about twenty feet high, without chimney or steeple, and lighted by a single row of small windows. An hourglass, which the minister turned as he proceeded and the sand ran out, was the only way of marking the sermon's length.

The church was officially organized on the same day the minister was ordained, with twelve men members and about the same number of women. They were all members of other churches, mostly in

Brimfield, where they had previously been obliged to go for divine worship. The new minister came from Pomfret, Connecticut, and was a Yale graduate.

Ten pounds was granted for schools in 1765, but by 1771 this was increased to twenty-five pounds. In the latter year the town was divided into nine school districts, so each received but a small sum. It was eked out by "boarding round" the teachers, by firewood furnished by parents and, no doubt, at times with money raised in the school districts.

Deacon Abel Goodell was chosen delegate to the Provincial Congress in 1774 and soon a company of minute men was drilling under Freeborn Moulton as captain and Nathaniel Sikes as lieutenant. In a letter written by Joseph Clarke, of Northampton, about a meeting of patriots held at Parson's Tavern in Springfield, is this piece of news: "Capt. Merrick of Monson was treated with for uttering impudent expressions. I thought they would have tarred and feathered him, and I thought he almost deserved it." Monson was made a town with full powers in 1776 and Deacon Abijah Newell was the first representative. The town voted unanimously in favor of independence and offered a bounty of twenty pounds to men who would enlist in the Continental Army. Nearly, if not all, of the able-bodied men in Monson were at one time or another on the field of battle and commissioned officers were numerous. The minister went as chaplain in the army for six months and then a year at a time.

A letter addressed by Benjamin Munn, Abel Goodell and Noah Sabin to Samuel Adams and Joseph Warren at Boston, says:

"We send a testimonial of our firm adherence to the great cause, in which everything dear to us is embarked. We profess a ready cheerfulness to shed our blood to oppose tyranny and oppression. We have eighty fellows in this district, a great part of which are disciplined and ready marksmen. I dare be bold to say that, at thirty rods' distant, they would pick off Tories as fast as so many hawks would pick frogs from a frog pond."

Several votes are recorded as paying bounties of increasing size and the care of veterans' families while away on duty added to the



heavy load borne by the people. Clothing was sent from Monson to the soldiers in Philadelphia by Benjamin Munn and blankets were sometimes stripped from the beds when requisitioned.

During the Revolution smallpox became very prevalent and May 18, 1778, Monson voted to set up "Enockeulation" under certain restrictions by the selectmen. With proper care only a small percentage of deaths occurred when thus supervised, but left without control whole families were sometimes wiped out.

Depreciation of currency after the war is shown in the price of nine pounds per day paid for work on the highways during the summer months and six pounds a day the rest of the year. Money was first expressed in dollars and cents about 1795, but pounds, shillings and pence continued to be used for some time by those who did not enjoy new ways.

Baptists or "Separates" began to be common by 1768, when a church of that faith was organized in Wilbraham, and twenty years later Freeborn Moulton and sixty others were set off as the first Baptist Church of Monson. A meetinghouse was built on the Hampden Road, but it fell into a neglected state and finally burned. Toward the end of the century both Congregationalists and Baptists felt the need of a new meetinghouse and decided to combine forces and build one in which all denominations might worship. The "supply" was to be furnished in proportion to the amount each group could realize from its members in the sale of pews. The pews were sold at auction and brought from \$11 to \$161 each. In the new church the young women were to sit on the east and the young men on the west side of the gallery. This church was dedicated November 16, 1803, and while the plan of union was not uncommon in small towns at this time, it did not prove entirely satisfactory; so, in 1817, after some years of relationship with the Baptists at Wilbraham, a church was built in the western part of the town of Monson.

A narrow valley runs the whole length of the township from north to south and here are rich meadows and productive soil flanked on the slopes by good pasturage. The fine farming land with plentiful forests satisfied the early settlers, but after the Revolution other employment was sought and Chicopee River and Twelve Mile Brook became thickly studded with saw, grist, clover, carding, cotton and woolen mills. The Monson and Brimfield Manufacturing Company,



in 1810, built a fine stone mill for making cotton goods. The Monson Woolen Manufacturing Company and the Hampden Cotton Manufacturing Company followed soon after. Joseph and Jeremiah Bumpstead had iron works where bar iron was made from scrap iron, and bog iron was mined near Cato's pool in Silver Street. Lead pipe was made by Timothy Packard for a time. The lead was run in sheets, cut to proper width and moulded on an iron rod six feet long. The long joint was then soldered. A factory for making ladies' bonnets was carried on by Merrick and Fay, who sometimes employed one hundred and fifty persons and used \$500 worth of stock in a day. Some of this work was sent out to families in Monson and surrounding towns and did much to build up the finances of the region. Overalls, shirts and drawers were made by Rogers and Company and tinware by N. P. Barton. As much as \$16,000 worth of gold and silver spectacles were at one time produced annually by skilled labor in the town, which also speculated in silk worms and mulberry trees when the fever swept the Connecticut valley.

The Monson granite quarries were first opened by the United States Government in 1809 to get stone for building the armory in Springfield. After they had taken out all they needed the quarries remained unworked until Rufus Flynt acquired them and began work with five men in 1825. The industry grew rapidly and came to be one of the most important in the town; the hewn and unhewn granite was sent far and wide. The stone is of two distinct shades, light and dark, and is free from iron. Yokes of oxen were at first used for the heavy work at the quarry and strings of them could be seen going to work daily. They were slow, but strong and patient, and would pull until they got down on their knees. The stone was cut, finished and dressed by hand labor alone for many years.

When William Flynt was owner of the quarries he had an old bay horse which he drove to the works every morning and then sent him back home without a driver. The horse was very careful and never had an accident.

The people of Monson were not slow to express their patriotism when the Civil War broke out. Fifteen days after Fort Sumter was fired on they held a town meeting and soon it was loyally voted "That all the residents of Monson who enlist in the U. S. service shall have their support and that of their families while drilling and preparing

for active service from the funds of the town, and when called into active service, shall have a good outfit and ten dollars per month and their families sufficient support during such service." Bounties of one hundred and one hundred and fifty dollars were later offered for enlisted men and finally they were drafted. Monson furnished two hundred and eighty men for the service, which was over one-third of the able-bodied men of the town and eighteen more than its quota.

The musket and canteen used by Rodney Bradway in the Civil War are still preserved in the family, as is also a six-foot rifle which Amon Bradway used in hunting. Amon was the son of Abel, who, with his wife, came into Monson mounted on horseback and carrying all their earthly possessions in saddlebags. The love of hunting and fishing was a trait of the family and an old resident relates what a common thing it was to see "Aunt Sophie," the Bradway mare, hitched to a farm wagon jogging briskly along toward some pond, a flat-bottomed boat in the wagon, and five Bradway men aboard bound for a day's fishing.

Monson Academy, a State-aided institution, was the second of its kind established in Hampden County. Abner Brown, representative to the General Court, was instrumental in getting the bill for its organization through the Legislature. Brimfield struggled against Monson to acquire the institution, but Monson citizens subscribed \$4,000 for the building and preparation of the ground and won out. The academy building was dedicated October 23, 1806, and opened in November with twenty-one pupils. A charity fund to aid candidates for the ministry was established in 1825, chiefly through the exertions of Dr. Alfred Ely, pastor of the Congregational Church in Monson. He had been closely identified with school work in the town for many years and had introduced the reading of the Bible and the study of the catechism. He examined the teachers and visited the pupils and never received any compensation for the work he did. Dr. Simeon Colton, a graduate of Yale, was the first principal. An unusual proportion of graduates, as the years went on, became ministers and missionaries. Two students from Greece came to the academy in 1829, one of whom became the noted Professor Sophocles. In 1847 three Chinese boys entered the academy. Yung Wing, trained in Monson, was an internationally known educator. Another authority on educational matters, Henry Barnard, was also

a student. As the institution gr̄ew dormitories and a gymnasium were added. A library fund was started by joint donations of Rufus Flynt and Timothy Packard. Joel Norcross was another liberal benefactor.

By an act of the Legislature in 1852 Monson acquired what was then called a State institution for "paupers" large enough to accommodate five hundred inmates. All ages seem to have been taken in from infants up. Dr. Samuel D. Brooks, of South Hadley, was the first superintendent, a man firm but kind, who believed his work should be educational as well as furnishing physical care. A farm of one hundred and eighty-five acres was a part of the plant, though few of the inmates at that time were able to do much work.

January 4, 1835, was known as "the cold Sabbath of January." Even the "oldest inhabitants" at that time could not recollect any previous day when the thermometer registered thirty-five degrees below zero. The following Monday was even colder and, while Tuesday was a little warmer, the next four days ranged from five to seventeen degrees below zero.

October 30 of the same year there was an almost complete eclipse of the sun.

A disastrous flood which cost the town of Monson sixty or seventy thousand dollars occurred on October 4, 1869. After a rain of nearly three whole days every bridge and every dam on the stream was washed away and roads were badly gullied and in some places impassable. Factories and houses were undermined and the cellars flooded. Loose lumber and outbuildings floated away and individual losses were great.

The dark day of September 6, 1881, was a fit successor of the one in 1780. The sun was obscured and the sky had a ghastly appearance. Lamps were lighted in the forenoon in the homes and the factories and stores were illuminated as if it were night. Mothers gathered their children in with apprehension and the hens went to roost soon after their morning feed. People complained of faintness and a few actually swooned. Dew fell at midday, but by evening the smoke which caused the darkness had cleared away.

On August 10, 1883, two distinct earthquake shocks were felt, sufficient to jar open doors and rattle windows.



Horace Moulton and two other students at Monson Academy held Methodist meetings at the north and south villages in the summer of 1825. A chapel was built in South Monson the following year and was dedicated free of debt, though bare and unfinished and having only rough benches for seats. A much finer structure was built in 1849 and then enlarged later. Other churches are the Roman Catholic and the Universalist.

Monson showed its quality by forming the Social Library Company as early as 1796. Thirty-one persons were subscribers and the books were kept in the home of Squire Jonathan Torrey. There were two hundred and thirty-five volumes, including sermons and works of theology. After functioning for fifty-six years the books were divided among the owners. The Augmenting Social Library Association was organized in 1800 and had from twelve to eighteen members. Later came the library for the benefit of Monson Academy and also one of agricultural books owned by farmers who contributed five dollars each. The free public library was opened in 1878 and in 1882 was housed in a memorial building given by Mrs. Carrie R. Dale, in memory of her father, Horatio Lyon.

Flynt Park is a remarkable piece of hillside which rises in steep terraces at the western borders of the village. It is a place of winding roads, varied woodland and open fields. On one of the highest of its hills was built a tower which gave far views over the surrounding region. A roomy pavilion afforded shelter and a small museum housed a good collection of familiar and unfamiliar animals. This park, as well as many of the other good things the town enjoyed, was the gift of W. N. Flynt, who found his wealth in the granite quarries of the town. It ceased to be kept up as a public park after the death of the elder Mr. Flynt, but it is still a lovely spot and attracts those who enjoy a quiet picnic or peaceful walk.

Mrs. Phœbe Hinshaw Brown, a long-time resident of Monson, wrote many beautiful hymns and prose compositions. One sacred and well loved lyric commences:

"I love to steal a while away  
From every cumbering care."

A Nantucket whale with "Captain" George H. Newton, of Monson, in charge made a lengthy railroad journey approximately sixty years ago. Judge Newton, a former Special Justice of the District



Court of Eastern Hampden County, who spent a summer in Nantucket about sixty-five years ago, was told by deep sea fishermen there of whales being occasionally washed up on the shore. He became interested and asked to be notified when one appeared. On receiving the notice he went down and bought the whale. It was towed to the mainland, loaded on two freight cars, and taken on a tour of exhibition. The judge acted as lecturer and gave an educational talk. The first exhibition was held at Springfield and children were admitted free, but a small charge was made for adults. The schools of the city were closed to allow the children to attend, it being specified that they must be accompanied by parent or guardian. The whale was taken as far west as Chicago, where by request of the mayor it was exhibited in a park, after a special track was laid across a highway so it might be transported.

Among the visitors was Sarah Bernhardt, the famous actress, who was so interested in the exhibit that Judge Newton cut off one of the whale's fins and presented it to her. The last exhibit was at Bay City, Michigan, where the whale began to make its own presence known. Unsuccessful efforts were then made to embalm it and it was finally cut up there and the oil extracted. Judge Newton brought home many of the bones and three of the vertebrae are still to be seen at the home of Arthur E. Fitch, of Palmer.

The Massachusetts Hospital for Epileptics was established in 1895 and the buildings erected on the site of the State Primary School at Monson. The plan was to provide congenial surroundings, hopeful care and training in self-support. A boot and shoe manufactory is worked to advantage with the patients' labor. The total number of buildings is now about fifty, which take care of 1,500 cases. Occupational therapy has a prominent place in the program of the hospital and sports, entertainments and social affairs are promoted. The farm, which accommodates about one hundred and thirty head of cattle, is largely operated by patients and they take care of the grounds and roads. This growing institution is already over-populated and more buildings are needed. The social service department makes family investigations, and research work is carried on by members of the staff.

The quarries are now owned by James Moran and some stone has been gotten out recently to be used in Works Progress Adminis-

tration projects, but the amount is negligible compared to the past, when it was shipped away in quantity. The largest stone ever quarried here was three hundred and fifty-four feet long, eleven feet wide and four feet thick. Monson's substantial library building is constructed of Monson granite and the same stone appears again in their town hall.

The Ellis family, now connected with the mills of that name, is represented by two men, Dwight and George, who live in Longmeadow. Frank Entwistle is also a member of the firm. No. 1 mill was built by the father of the present owners of the Ellis name and No. 3 mill is now being operated also. A very fine quality of English broadcloth has been a leading output, as well as upholstery material for caskets and automobiles. The covering material for tennis balls is also made here.

The Cushman Mills were once an important part of Monson's industrial life, but their building is now used only as a storage house. For a time after they ceased to make fine woolen there it was operated as a hat shop, but that finally closed down along with many other small town manufactures.

Both the Cushman and Ellis families have shown their interest and public spirit by gifts to the town of Monson. Mrs. E. D. Cushman gave her house and land for use as a Home for Aged People and endowed a room in it. This project was sponsored by the King's Daughters, who worked valiantly to raise the necessary money to keep it going. Mrs. A. D. Ellis also endowed a room in the home and in her will recently left \$5,000 to the institution. At the present time the home is caring for women only, though it still retains its former name.

In 1916 Mrs. A. D. Ellis also gave to the town the site for a school building and sufficient money to pay for its construction.

The Monson "Register," put out by the publisher of the Palmer "Journal-Register," is the only town newspaper.

The Quaboag Country Club is located in Monson, but its membership is made up largely of Palmer people. It carries on an extensive program of sports and has featured some important teams and individual players.

There has recently come to light the account book of Stephen Cross, of Monson. He was evidently a man of affairs with a farm to manage

and an active wood-working business. At various times he had men who worked for him and he made business trips to other towns.

The large, brown account book, bound in calf skin and tied with leather thongs, was bought by him on January 16, 1792, and cost ten shillings. Its unruled pages are numbered by hand and a few entries which are not accounts add to the interest and help interpret the history revealed by its pages. The old-fashioned writing and varied spelling of even common words, added to the use of the long "s" and the frequent appearance of terms now nearly obsolete, make the deciphering somewhat difficult.

Quite properly the following admonition appears on the first page:

"Steal not this book my honest friend  
For fear the gallows will be your end.  
This book is one, the gallows is another.  
Steal not the one for fear of the other."

It would be natural to suppose that the bookkeeping started with the marriage of the young man when he began business for himself, but so much is set down during the first year that he must have been well started long before.

In 1792 he received two shillings and six pence for "bording the School Mists (mistress) one weeke." During the next twenty years, among other things, he made many coffins and spells the word in seven different ways!

There were two and one-half yards of ribbed velvet bought in 1792, which makes one think of fancy vests or else of some garment for a wife. If she was a new wife in that year she went right to work weaving and sewing, for there are items which mention "Cot Botnes" (coat buttons) and "Ves Botnes" (vest buttons) and "weving cloyth" (weaving cloth). Sometimes there were twenty-five yards in a piece, and different kinds are mentioned through the following years such as bed blankets, tow cloth, fulled woolen, diaper, coverlets and checked linen. "One qurts of Indowgo" (one quart of indigo) must have added quite a little joy and color to her work that year, and somebody in the household hired Abner Johnson's horse, drove it ten miles for two shillings and eight pence, bought a broom for a shilling and two cards of gingerbread for eight pence. This sounds like a lady's shopping trip and is balanced by one in 1799, evidently taken by the



man of the house. He went in the "Carrig" (carriage) "20 milds att 4 pence pr. mile," was gone two days, used one bushel of corn, probably for horse feed, and makes note of three pounds of "tobacker," which cost two shillings.

Little money changed hands in the various transactions carried on through all the years until Stephen Cross' last entry in 1834. Instead the bartering system was used and produce or work was the medium of exchange. Still accounts did not run on endlessly, but were carefully closed with these words: "This day we the subscribers reckoned and settled all book accounts to this date and made even balance as witness our hands," followed by the names of debtor and creditor. For instance, during this first year Cross received in pay for making a chest, table, great chair and six common chairs, one tester frame and one bedstead, articles made by a worker in another line—namely, two pairs of shoes and a leather apron together with twelve pounds of leather and one "chep skin," probably "sheep skin." Mrs. Cross must have been a tailoress for somebody got a pair of "Trowseys," one "Weckit" and one "Cott" made that year, for which she was paid four shillings and six pence. If she did not only the cutting, fitting and sewing, but most likely the pressing also with the old-fashioned tailor's goose heated in the fireplace, she certainly well earned all she was paid.

On April 14, 1794, "A bill of axpence" states: "This day I rased my hous, 15 pounds." It includes 9,000 shingles, 4,000 feet of boards, 4,000 ten-penny nails, 11,000 shingle nails and ten window frames. "Bilding my Chimneley" cost ten pounds. Evidently the house was not complete in the spring for an October item has a charge of over ten pounds for "doing my Saller" (cellar) "and Saller Stars" (stairs) and "Laing the Laan Flaours and 600 of spyks." Probably not all of the six hundred spikes were used in the cellar stairs, but only the writer could tell us if the next item is meant for "loom floors."

Two years later Stephen Cross is "Boulding a Neow Barne and the holl Cost to Bee 30 pounds," truly a Yankee sound to that entry. This barn was "32 feete by 24 feete and 12 feete hi." The whole cost of these two structures as added up at the foot of the ledger page was three pence over ninety pounds.

Two shillings was paid for a day's work of a man, no doubt twelve hours at least, though when "Giting hay" three shillings was once paid.



February 16, 1798, Mr. Tams Nelson and his wife, with one cow, came to work for Mr. Cross. We guess at the moving of goods and people from the ledger's charge for a two-day trip to Stafford and back, and five shillings for housing five yoke of oxen over night. In July the Nelsons must have had some sort of a celebration, perhaps a christening, for they are charged with one quart of wine, one pint of rum, and one quart of molasses. Though land was cheap and plentiful the hired man's cow was not kept for nothing, as her hay cost one shilling a week until the third of May, when she was put out to pasture at ten pence a week.

Ashes, tallow and mutton fat were both bought and sold according to need, "12 pds Sope Greese, 4 shillings," being one entry during the first year. Sheep skins and hides also helped out the income.

One page in the year 1818 gives the names and birth dates of Stephen and Sarah Cross' twelve children. Elsewhere in the ledger is an account with the doctor running over a number of years with periodic entries of woven cloth which were sold to him.

Dollars and cents began to be set down in the account book about 1812, but for some time Stephen seems about as uncertain over the new money as he is of how to spell.

A folded paper shut into the back of the old ledger gives the inventory of Stephen Cross' estate in 1838. His fifty acres of land with the buildings on them were valued at \$783. Among the things listed are an "old white-faced cow \$20," seventeen sheep at \$1.50 each and one calf, \$5. Two swine are valued at \$28.66. The list was dated October 5, but "potatoes in the ground" were thought still to be worth something and an item of "Old iron, \$2," shows how that was carefully saved. Among the household articles a clock and case sound too cheap at thirteen cents in contrast with two meal bags at fifty cents. Two wooden bowls and a kneading-trough would bring at the present time more than the forty-two cent value placed on them then. The house furnishings seem rather scanty in view of the fact that there had been twelve children in the family, but perhaps each had been given a share of the furnishings as he or she left the home, and possibly the widow had already claimed her "third." One bureau, two "beadsteads" and bedding, one desk, one "bedstead and cord," lot of chairs, "tables, 67 cents" and another clock seem to constitute the furniture. The kitchen utensils include two flat irons, two candle-

sticks and irons, five shovels and tongs, earthenware worth seventy-five cents, stoneware \$1.50, ironware \$2, a back-breaking four-pail brass kettle, seven bottles and a "wooden bottle." Fifty pounds of cheese seems like a goodly amount to have on hand, even though worth only \$3. A seventy-five cent loom, a fifty cent wheel and a reel account for eleven yards of flannel worth \$4.42, probably prepared for the coming winter. Eight sheets and five bed coverings are cheap at \$2, for the sheets were probably all linen and coverings all wool. No clothing was listed and the whole amounted to only a little over a thousand dollars.

There are nearly eight hundred pages in the book and not much space is wasted, for when an account was completed without using all of the page the thrifty Stephen went back in some subsequent year and started a new account. Once in a while he wrote in a bit of news such as the "Great Frost" on May 17, 1794, and the "grat Floud" on August 13, 1795. We wish that he had put in more of such items before he "Rased" his last bushel of "Protaters" and "Fineshed haying in the Madey."

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*Montgomery Among the Hills*

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## CHAPTER XV

### *Montgomery Among the Hills*

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One of the smallest of the Hampden County towns lies among the rocky, rugged foothills of the Berkshires. It originally was included mainly in Westfield as a part of the portion known as the "New Addition." Soon after the close of the last French and Indian War, Ephraim Avery and his family left the flourishing town of Westfield, made their way up along the small river and settled not far from Mt. Tekoa. Moose Meadow nearby may have supplied him with good hunting. During the years 1767 and 1768 other settlers followed and pushed on beyond to make their homes. The land was cheap, yet productive, and in the course of a few years quite a settlement sprang up.

When the total number of families had increased to fifty or more the people of the New Addition petitioned the General Court to be incorporated as a town. This was granted in 1780 and the name of Montgomery was given to it. This was in honor of General Richard Montgomery, one of America's bravest Revolutionary patriots, who was killed in battle at Quebec in 1775. Almost the first work of the little new town was to pay a bounty of four pounds for all who would serve one month as soldiers in the war for freedom and an additional sum for each month thereafter. Already several of the sturdy young men of the town were in the army and the spirit of disloyalty never was shown in Montgomery.

Captain Sylvester Squier was one of the early settlers who entered the military service and rose in the ranks. Oliver Clark was one of the first to follow the pioneer into the region and his seven sons and two daughters helped to people the region. Another head of a worthy family was David Allyn, who raised to maturity seven sons and six daughters. Daniel Barrett, who came into Montgomery about the same time, also had seven sons. Another old and prominent name in Montgomery is that of Moore. Joel Moore was the pioneer and his industrious descendants are numerous in Hampden

County. Richard Falley settled just over the line from Westfield and carried on a gun shop, where he made muskets for the American soldiers in the Revolutionary War and also in the War of 1812. The foundations of his old shop can still be seen on the farm where he lived. Falley's daughter was grandmother of former President Grover Cleveland. George Gorham was a member of General Washington's bodyguard.

As soon as town government was set up in 1780 the people began discussing church matters and in December of the same year six pounds was appropriated for the support of preaching. Three years later Rev. John Ballantine was engaged to preach at the price of two dollars for each Sabbath service for twenty weeks. Meetings were held in the houses of the inhabitants at first, but as the town grew in numbers and prosperity it began to plan for a house of worship. This was built in 1797, when a Congregational Church Society was formed with but five members. Reverend Seth Noble, son of Thomas Noble, of Westfield, was installed as the first regular pastor on November 4, 1801, and served about five years. Mr. Noble was not a liberally educated man, but he was a divine with a good degree of native talent. His fondness for the tune of Bangor was the cause of that name being bestowed on that city in Maine. He was preaching at that point when the town was incorporated and went to Boston in behalf of the people to present their petition to the General Court. The town wished to be named "Sunfield," but he struck out that word and inserted Bangor, which was accepted.

Montgomery lost a small part of its territory to the town of Russell in 1792, but it also had annexed to it in the same year parts of the neighboring towns of Norwich and Southampton.

The Methodists began to hold services in Montgomery between 1825 and 1830, but it was about twenty years before they built a church opposite the present Congregational building, which was erected in 1848. The two religious societies have functioned harmoniously. At times the churches were occupied alternately, both faiths making up the audiences together. The Second Adventists also had an organization in Montgomery and sometimes used the Congregational Church as their place of meeting.

Mt. Shatterack on the western border of the town is the highest point. Its elevation of 1,160 feet overlooks Shatterack Pond on

the east. English Grass Cave on Shatterack Range is said to consist of three sections, the innermost one being strewn with many bones. Mrs. W. D. Allen, wife of the town clerk, was anxious to explore the cave around 1925, but retreated in great haste when a medley of indescribable noises assailed her ears. Bungy Hill rises in the eastern part of Montgomery and Rock House Mountain occupies the northwest corner. Mt. Tekoa, in the south on the edge of Westfield, is perhaps the best known height, as it was a favorite drive for the people of that town. Rattlesnakes seem to be more plentiful there than in any other part of Hampden County and perhaps offered some protection to the counterfeiters who were said to have occupied a cave on its slopes some years ago. Tradition tells of a gold mine on or near the Westfield-Montgomery Highway about one and one-half miles beyond the Westfield line.

Agriculture has always been the main occupation with just the necessary activities to support and supplement it. Several creameries were operated successfully and C. A. Williams had an ax helve factory. Cidermakers, carpenters, painters, wheelwrights and cattle dealers added to the prosperity of the town. In recent years summer people have come in to enjoy the beauty of Montgomery's hills. The most noted of these is J. J. LaValley, an artist of wide repute. The year 'round population of the town has dwindled until the 1930 census listed only one hundred and forty-one people in the whole township. About one hundred and twenty-five cellar holes in the town gives an idea of its size in past years.

The three Darrick brothers and sister operate the Mountain View dairy and turkey farm, which produces more turkeys than any other place within fifty miles.





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*Palmer, the "Elbow Tract"*

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## CHAPTER XVI

### *Palmer, the "Elbow Tract"*

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No records have been found to show that any Indian clan laid claim to ownership of the land now included in the town of Palmer, or that any deed of transfer to the whites was executed. Nor is there any sign of a permanent Indian village within the territory, though such were known to have been located at Chicopee, Springfield, Brimfield, and Brookfield. But at least three Indian trails crossed the township, one in the eastern, one in the northern, and the other in the southern part. The trail through the eastern part of the "Elbow Tract" ran from the native settlement at Sherman's Pond in Brimfield to the falls at Ware Village, thus opening direct communication between the great planting fields at the former place and the important salmon fishing place at the latter. The trail through the northern part of the Elbows was the continuation of what is known as the "Nashaway Trail" leading from Lancaster and going through Ludlow to the Great Falls in the Connecticut River. The southern trail started in Woodstock, Connecticut, and passed just north of Steerage Rock in Brimfield to the Quabaug River a short distance above the Elbow, where it crossed into Palmer and followed in the main the course of the Bay Path toward the Great River.

Menamesick, the Indian name of the Chicopee River, means "great fishing basket" or "fishing weir" and the Quabaug Indians probably had a great spring gathering at the falls above Three Rivers. Shad could not leap the falls at Chicopee, but salmon made the passage with little difficulty. The weirs were rude stone walls built out from opposite sides of the river pointing down stream until they nearly met each other. At this narrow opening a large cage made of twigs and hoops bound together with bark was placed. The fish were roasted over the coals and the Indians had a feast, gorging themselves to repletion. The squaws waited on their lords and split

and dried what surplus fish was left, while the men slept off the banquet and gambled and wrestled.

The Indian clans had all been broken up and had left these parts before a settlement was begun at the Elbows. But now and then a single family would return and erect a wigwam on the old site and plant a patch of corn or pumpkins. One such spot is known as Wigwam Brook, and it is not unlikely that the dusky campers held corn roasts and succotash parties near there in September and were more or less of a pest to the farmers. During the French and Indian wars these rovers were ready to act as spies and guides when hostile bands harassed the outlying settlements. All the towns were guarded by troops and scouts were sent into the woods, but we have no records to show that the few settlers here at that time were molested or were protected by soldiers. The men used to go to their fields, gun in hand, and the women left at home were ready to protect themselves and their children. Grandmother Ferrell, all alone in her log cabin, and startled by the howling of her dog, is said to have felt greatly relieved when she heard the well-known yell of a panther, and exclaimed: "Oh, mister! I'm glad it is only you!"

The earliest document relating to this territory calls it simply "A tract of land belonging to the Province of Massachusetts," but in a deed, dated 1729, it is called "New Marlborough," and later the name "Kingsfield" or "Kingstown" is used, as well as the "Elbows" or the "Elbow tract." Kingstown was preferred by the settlers as it commemorated the name of John King, the first settler. Mr. King came here from Boston in 1716 and tradition says that the family, which included a year-old baby, spent their first night at the spring on the hillside near the old graveyard. His log cabin was built by the old Bay Path, and his large family of sons and daughters located near him, so that the name of "King's Row" came to be applied to that part of the highway. At least fifteen other families came in the next ten years, most of them from Springfield or other river towns.

But an influx of another sort soon added to the population of the tract, a group of people of whom it was said: "They were men of pluck and muscle, who hewed down the trees that built their frontier homes and churches; men who coveted no fine linen for their tables, so that they had enough of cornbread and potatoes; and yet imbued with such a thirst for learning that they became the founders of many



of our foremost schools and colleges." These were Scotch people from the North of Ireland, the first of whom came to Boston about 1719 in five ships and went out from there singly and in groups to various towns. They were religious and clannish, as well as hard-working and thrifty. The women brought with them their flax-wheels and excelled in the art of spinning fine linen thread. A group made their way to Worcester, where they did not succeed in happily establishing themselves and gradually some found their way to the Elbows, but the majority of the Scotch people there were of a later and direct migration. The Scotch brought the potato with them to America, but others were slow to accept it as it was then a coarse-grained tuber and considered more of a curiosity than a valuable addition to the diet. As late as 1795 potatoes were not a regular article of food among the better class of farmers and the Reverend Jonathan Hubbard, of Sheffield, came near to being dealt with by the church for raising twenty bushels in one year.

Besides raising potatoes, corn, wheat, rye, peas, oats, barley and flax, the early settlers got a little income from turpentine and tar. Pitch pines were common on the plains and were boxed by cutting a hollow the width of an ax in the trunk, where the turpentine would collect and could be dipped out. Much of the tar at first was obtained by burning in kilns the knots and hearts of old fallen trees. Saw logs and lumber were also sold.

"Scotch linen" came to be in great demand as soon as its excellence was known and the women of these families were kept busy spinning and weaving for their own households and others. A few made "linsey-woolsey" of flax and wool, but most of the product went out in the form of linen or tow. As late as the year 1809 a bridal outfit included a "great wheel," a "little wheel" and a "reel."

In 1726 the men who had located on King's Row and vicinity sent a petition to the General Court asking for precinct privileges. Soon after this Joshua Lamb and Company asserted a claim to the country and so began a long drawn out contest for ownership which lasted many years and no doubt delayed the formation of a town. A committee from the General Court settled many of the property rights in 1733 and it was no small matter to view the holdings and establish acreage and boundaries for eighty persons. Nor did they overlook the welfare of the new settlement, for one man was allowed his land

in consideration of building a sawmill, another for erecting a grist-mill, and the group was to set aside land for the ministry and schools and lay out roads and highways.

The committee decided that thirty-one persons had settled at the Elbows without even a semblance of a claim to buying the land, but they were not driven out. Instead, they were charitably granted "a single lot," which included their homes and improvements and measured from fifty to one hundred acres. The sum of five hundred pounds was ordered paid to the General Court as a sort of penalty for their presumptuous settlement without authority. That the people appreciated the great service of this committee is shown by their vote of appreciation and their gift to each of a hundred acres of the "common land."

The young plantation, now knowing its legal standing, immediately began to hold meetings and regulate the affairs of the community, which up to this time had been taken care of, more or less, on a voluntary basis. They chose committees, elected officers, assessed rates, and when an agent was sent to Boston they paid his expenses. Up to this time there had been preaching, but no settled minister. Various ones had served from quarter to quarter, often receiving "country pay," which was produce and was collected by a committee in charge and delivered to the minister. Reverend John Harvey, a Scotchman, born in the North of Ireland and a graduate of the university, had preached a little over three years at eighty pounds a year besides the grant of a lot. He seems to have pleased the people sufficiently well for they applied to the Hampshire Association for advice as to settling him. The association approved and Mr. Harvey accepted the call on condition that they would add firewood to their offer.

The ordination took place on June 5, 1734, on a platform under "a great White Oak tree." The council consisted of four Presbyterian and one Congregational ministers, though other Congregationalists had been invited to attend. A two penny per acre tax was levied on farms under special grants outside of the plantation, which brought in about sixteen pounds a year toward building a meeting-house, but the owners did not like the ruling and one man succeeded in having his property set off to the town of Brookfield. Church and town meetings were held at John King's, William Crawford's, James

Shearer's and other places, but August 27, 1733, four men were chosen to "pitch upon" a location for the meetinghouse. Nearly two years were spent in choosing and rejecting spots and in the meantime timber was cut and hauled to a place agreed on, only to have a vote passed against the site. But this could not go on forever, so finally every man was bidden to bring in his vote for a location and then the two places receiving the most votes were decided between by a lot drawn by Mr. Harvey, "after solemn prayer." The "knowl near Crawford's house" won and here the frame was raised in the spring of 1735, timber trees having been donated and a hundred pounds voted for building and finishing.

The church was of necessity a plain structure, neither ceiled nor plastered and for a time only single boarded. Benches were placed in the center and the men and women sat on separate sides. The pulpit was a cage-like box perched on posts and reached by a narrow flight of stairs, but it had a cushion on which the Bible rested. Pews were not put in for about ten years and then were ranged along the walls at the owner's expense. In the summer of 1744 a lawless hunter stole the lead from some of the window panes for bullets. Only one sermon was preached in the winter season and sometimes the minister adjourned the gathering to the tavern nearby, as he could not be heard above the thumping of the benumbed feet. When seats were put in the gallery for the young people "two fit men" were appointed to look after them. Probably a choir was not organized for some years.

All this time the five hundred pounds penalty was hanging over the plantation and in addition still more untaxable grants were made to men who had served the public in various ways, such as that given to Captain John Sheldon in consideration of his several journeys to Canada after the captives from Deerfield. Efforts were made to have the sum abated or lessened owing to the poverty of the Elbows and the difficulty of fairly assessing the sums on owners, but after many years and sales at vendues for non-payment the debt was eventually discharged. Another source of trouble was the difference in standing of the forty-eight "proprietors" who had legally settled and could have some of the common lands and the thirty-one "grantees" who had illegally taken up land and could only acquire more by purchase.



Nor were these the only troubles the settlement experienced, for in 1738 the minister was before the grand jury at Northampton for drunkenness and pleaded guilty! A large proportion of his parish stood by him, but others signed a petition against him and for several years the parish was stirred to its foundations. Finally, Mr. Harvey's conduct was such that even his former friends were alienated and he was obliged to resign after ministering to the people for seventeen years. Then followed a period of "supplies" to the pulpit.

Some families living in the eastern part of the plantation about this time petitioned to be separated from the Elbows, giving as their reason the usual one of too great a distance from public worship, but no doubt the church troubles played their part in the decision. They were granted permission to incorporate the town of Western in 1741. A similar petition from those living in the north part of the Elbow Tract did not result in the formation of a separate town, but the families were relieved of their taxes on condition that they would furnish public worship for themselves.

Besides the troubles already mentioned there was the basic one of two different sorts of people trying to live together. Those of English descent held twenty-six of the proprietary lots, and were men of courage and self-esteem, familiar with laws and customs and well fitted to hold responsible positions. The Scotch held only thirteen of the proprietary lots and were clannish and jealous of their rights, but had high ideals of fidelity and frugality in public affairs and frequently "called to account" their treasurers and collectors, so that it was not unusual to have five out of seven town meetings undoing the work of the others.

Still the Elbow Tract pluckily kept on growing and in January, 1752, succeeded after several efforts in being made a "district." They asked for the name of Kingstown, but were given that of Palmer in honor of a relative of the Governor's who had just died in Scotland. One of the first things the people turned their attention to after they had elected their district officers and passed the usual votes about highways and the "yoking" of hogs, was the selection of a new minister. Candidates were numerous and so were the opinions of the people. Reverend Ebenezer Kniblow supplied the pulpit in all fifteen sermons and received eight shillings for each "except three Sermons which we can prove he preached other men's works." Reverend Mr.



Burns did not remain long because he did not satisfactorily perform "ministerial visits and catechize yearly the several quarters of the Parish."

Palmer District records contain little allusion to the French and Indian War, which ended in 1749, and none to the one which was carried on between 1754 and 1763, but State records show that the militia was organized and requisitions for men were met.

The meetinghouse, built when the plantation was new and poor, now needed repair and to be put more in keeping with the standing of a district. Twenty shillings were voted to Ephraim Gates to do over the minister's pew and stairs and lower the pulpit, "without making it look worse than it does now." The roof is to be shingled and new window frames and sashes put in of a "handsome" size. Also, the floor is to be repaired and the "pew ground" revalued and sold. The owners of the pews could then rebuild, and if any pew lacked a window against it the owner could make a window for himself, provided he finished it "outside and in handsomely and well."

The War of the Revolution began several years before there was any actual fighting. "Taxation without representation" annoyed the colonies, and associations known as the "Sons of Liberty" were organized. They included both men and women, who pledged themselves to forego the luxuries of life rather than be indebted to England. Sheep were not killed, but kept for their wool, and the acreage of flax much increased. To be dressed in "home spun" was a mark of distinction. The Palmer inhabitants increased their stock of powder, lead and flints, and the minute men were organized and began to drill. The news of the battle of Lexington probably reached Palmer late in the evening of April 19 and forty-four minute men marched for the scene of action the next morning. Three days later the constables went from house to house calling the people to a public meeting to procure supplies and send them to the soldiers. This meeting was called as usual "In his Majesty's name," but after May 16, 1775, the calls were issued "In the name of the General Court and of the people of this Colony," casting off British allegiance in less than a month after our troops were fired on.

The minute men were volunteers, but now regular soldiers were needed and eight months' service called for. Colonel David Brewer, of Palmer, had a set of nine "beating papers," as they were called,

and easily secured his nine captains, who in turn made up their companies. Lists are so incomplete that it is not known how many Palmer men took part in this war. On the seventeenth day of June, 1776, at a "very full meeting," the inhabitants of Palmer solemnly and courageously issued what has been called THE PALMER DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, saying they would support with their "lives" and their "fortunes" a movement for separation from Great Britain.

The next year the Continental Congress called for three-year enlistments for the regular army and there followed short drafts for special service. Contagious diseases were prevalent in the army and many soldiers furloughed home failed to reach there. The town of Palmer paid Phineas Mixer two pounds and four shillings for taking care of a transient soldier, cleansing him from lice and curing him of the itch. Soon a committee was appointed to take care of soldiers' widows and families and to abate the taxes of men engaged in actual service. Clothing was requisitioned and bounties paid. Some of Burgoyne's men strayed from the ranks when marching through town and remained to make useful citizens.

September 1, 1779, a convention met to prepare a new State Constitution, to which Palmer offered some amendments. Lieutenant Joshua Shaw was the delegate and he received \$555 for his services. It was now more difficult to fill up quotas for the army and the surrender of Cornwallis was cheering news.

The eight years of war had upset codes of morals and codes of honor, as well as industrial and agricultural conditions. Real estate was unsalable and taxes heavy; lawyers and sheriffs were kept busy drawing up and serving writs and summons. People were uneasy over conditions and finally rebellion flared up under several leaders, among them Captain Francis Stone, of North Brookfield; Luke Day, of West Springfield; and Daniel Shays, of Pelham. Insurgents broke up court sittings, opened jails and planned to capture the arsenal at Springfield. Palmer was a convenient place for forces to meet and in January, 1787, Shays was there with a thousand men, who marched hopefully with their sprigs of hemlock and poor equipment on to Springfield, but were repulsed and fled in confusion without firing a gun. Three of them were killed and one mortally wounded and so the Rebellion ended.

While the towns were reëstablishing themselves financially, they were quite particular about strangers who came in and might gain a residence and so claim support. Many were "warned out" and some left and some remained to make good citizens. A parade ground of four acres near the meetinghouse was laid out and guide posts set up at all the principal roads. The earliest burying ground at the Elbows Plantation was near King's Row and after the Revolution it was enlarged and fenced, and again in 1865 it was enlarged. Graves were dug in 1800 for twenty-five cents each.

One old stone in the Palmer Center burying ground is ornamented with four faces in a row, two of them encircled with curls. It records the death of a man and his wife and their son and daughter. Besides the regular cut headstones of slate or marble or brown sandstone, there are many small native stones, without lettering, set on edge to mark the graves. One joyous inscription reads:

"When Gabriel sounds the trump of God,  
Then from my dusty bed I'll spring  
To sing and shout and shout and sing."

The matter of building a new meetinghouse was brought before the people in 1795 and they gradually made one important decision after another as to size, location, underpinning and pews, until it was dedicated October 21, 1798. It was voted to sell the old meetinghouse at "public auction to the highest bidder," and people relinquished their rights in the structure, "excepting the window in Scott's pew and Deacon Joshua Shaw's pew, which they may take out and carry away. Also any person a pew holder may take off and carry away the hinges of his pew." Land for fifty-five horse sheds was staked out, each man to build his own shed and the persons who stood highest on the estate bill had first choice of ground. A cupola was built on the church in 1808 for \$470, and Aaron Merrick presented the town with a bell. In gratitude the town ordered that the bell should be rung each year on the donor's birthday. Mr. Merrick had already given Palmer a town house in which to hold its business meetings. The church was painted and repaired in 1828 and Benjamin Converse and some others were allowed to put in a stove at their own expense. Mr. Converse had interested himself in the purchase of a bass viol a little while before.



The Congregational Society was organized in 1831 and used the old meetinghouse, but by common consent sixteen years later the territory was divided, the northern part of the town to belong to the First Parish and the southern part to the Second Parish. Churches were built at Depot Village and Thorndike and the old meetinghouse stood empty for a time. It was sold to the Catholics, who used it for a while and then it was taken down.

The ownership of the bell presented by Aaron Merrick was then a matter of dispute. The Thorndike parish claimed it as the First Parish and others thought it should remain in the old meetinghouse. Judge Chapman gave as his opinion that it belonged to the First Parish, but advised caution. About the middle of January, 1852, a church social was held at Thorndike and soon after midnight a party of about forty men in sleighs and an ox-sled went quietly to the Center, found their way into the meetinghouse, and with pulleys lowered the bell and loaded it on the sled. Just before starting away they gave the bell one loud ring, which waked the hamlet; but the invading force was too large to be overcome by the half-dressed dwellers and the prize was borne away to grace the cupola in the new meetinghouse. The affair created much excitement and ill feeling and at the March town meeting the selectmen were ordered to secure legal advice which should be binding on both parties. The following year a committee of ten was chosen to get the bell and rehang it in the old belfry, but soberer heads added a second vote that they give bonds of \$5,000 against all costs and expenses, which apparently ended the matter.

The first incorporated turnpike road built in Massachusetts ran through Palmer Center. It was chartered in 1796 through the influence of Captain Levi Pease, of Shrewsbury. Sometimes he had one passenger, sometimes none, but by regularity of trips, rain or shine, he soon enlisted confidence and secured patronage, and early obtained a contract from the government for carrying the mails. An addition as far as Wilbraham was built two years later with permission to set up a gate and take tolls. The Petersham and Monson Road also ran through Palmer from Stafford, Connecticut, and the stageman's horn frequently awoke the echoes.

The War of 1812 was very unpopular in the river towns and Governor Strong refused to order out the militia on request of the President. The conflict of State and National authorities seemed very



serious, but when the harbor of Boston was menaced with a blockade, Governor Strong changed his policy and called out the State troops to defend the coast towns. Palmer voted three dollars to each of its men who saw service at this time.

Until then there was no place in Palmer which really could be called a village, though the old Center had a meetinghouse and horse sheds, a schoolhouse, a graveyard, the town house and a tavern or two. At what is now Thorndike the land was largely owned by three families. On the upper privilege by the dam were a few small shops. The village received its name from Israel Thorndike, an enterprising manufacturer, who with John S. Wright and Luther Parks had a charter to manufacture cotton, wool and silk. Three Rivers was known as "Dark Corners" and had only two houses besides the saw and grist mills. At Bondsville was the home of Ezekiel Boyden and a saw and gristmill, and the rest of the region was wild and rough. The great waterpower in the main was still unused. Emelius Bond improved the waterpower here in 1825 and started making cloth. He did much in laying out and building up the village which bears his name.

As early as 1818 a few Palmer people began to hold meetings with Baptist ministers from neighboring towns as preachers, but it was not until 1832 that they built the Baptist Church at Three Rivers. The Methodists first met in a schoolhouse there, but finally built a small chapel. Another group of this denomination was formed at Thorndike and in 1855, after changes and difficulties in both societies, a church was built at Four Corners. The Second Baptist Church was built near the railroad station. The Union Evangelical Church was built in 1877. The Advent Christians built a chapel, but did not have a large organization, and the Universalists built an imposing edifice of Monson granite with a main tower one hundred and thirty feet in height. The Roman Catholics started their services in the old dryhouse of the Thorndike Manufacturing Company, about 1851, but eventually had three parishes, St. Mary's at Thorndike, St. Thomas' at Palmer Village, and St. Bartholomew's at Bondsville. A French Catholic church followed in 1884.

The Boston and Albany railroad was opened through Palmer in 1839 and marked a new era in business life. It wasn't long until the cheap depot and single track gave way to the freight yard and

enlarged facilities for transportation. The New London Northern, the Ware River and the Athol Branch all fed into the town and benefited its manufacturing interests.

Blanchard's scythe factory, which also turned out plow and shovel handles, ox-bows and wheel rims, was an important establishment. Blanchard was a celebrated inventor in a wide and varied field. He made a machine for heading tacks, one for bending wood, and one for turning irregular forms of wood. This last the United States Government secured for turning out gun stocks. The Three Rivers Manufacturing Company was incorporated for the purpose of producing cotton, woolen and linen goods, iron and machinery. They built a dam and a factory, but the canal which had to be blasted through solid rock was an expensive proposition and the company failed. The Palmer Company bought them out and was more successful under the leadership of Joseph Brown, who was a man of energy—"down in the cut, and up on the bank, and everywhere." The Thorndike Company was started in 1836 with plans similar to the Three Rivers Company and made a steady growth erecting dams and mills and factory houses. Other companies in Palmer were the Munroe Company, manufacturers of woolen goods; the Boston Duck Company, which also turned out cotton flannels; the Palmer Carpet Mill; Ridge's Food for Infants and Invalids; the Palmer Wire Company, and some minor ones. The Palmer Mills Otis Company of Three Rivers is now the largest manufacturing concern in Ware. The Boston Duck Mills and the Bondsville Bleaching and Dye Works are located on the same grounds and belong to the Otis Company of Boston. The Duck Mills manufacture cotton piece goods, blanket and robe cloth. The Wickwire Spencer Steel Company is located on the Springfield Road and makes wire, wire cables, screen cloth and netting. George F. Wright organized the Wright Wire Company in 1883 and the making of wire has been a main industry in Palmer ever since.

One day in February, 1849, two young men out hunting rabbits on the farm of Samuel Shaw found a sealed glass bottle well hidden under a ledge of rocks. When the sheet lead cap and cork were removed a lengthy letter signed "Robert Kidd" and dated 1700 was taken out. It told of buried money on Conant's Island in Boston Harbor with such detail and antique flavor that it seemed an authen-

tic document and aroused such interest that Samuel Shaw made a trip to Boston and visited the islands in the harbor, only to find that the spot described had been washed away. Robert Kidd wrote to his friend, John Bailey, in New York, that he had been taken for a pirate and thrown into prison and feared being carried to England. He wanted his friend to secure the money and diamonds and sent the letter by a messenger who could not read, with instructions to hide the papers in some safe place if he met with trouble or was taken by the Indians. The two young men who found the sealed bottle went to California as "forty-niners," but left behind them sworn statements as to the truth of their find. Their fathers quarreled over the ownership of the interesting letter and the case was taken to court, where Samuel Shaw swore the letter was a forgery and so the matter ended.

The town of Palmer is rugged in aspect, though abundantly interspersed with productive vales and meadow lands. Many hills diversify the landscape. These rise to a height of from seven hundred to 1,000 feet. Pattaguatic Hill, in the northern part of the town, is the highest; but Mount Dumplin, near the center of the town, is more striking for its abrupt rise from the lowlands. Watercourses are abundant and afford excellent power for manufacturing. Swift and Ware rivers join with the Quabaug to form the Chicopee River. The largest pond is Calkins or Yellow Lily, more commonly called Forest Lake. Two smaller bodies of water are Crawford Pond and Glassford's Pond, which is also known as Beckwith's Pond.

Three different trees have played an important part in Palmer history. The first was the "great white oak tree" under which the ordination of the first pastor took place. Another is the pine over a hundred feet in height standing not far from the St. Thomas' Roman Catholic Church. It has a girth of seventeen feet and won its fame over one hundred and fifty years ago. Thomas King, a son of the first settler, was on his way to church when he caught sight of a large bear in its branches. He brought it promptly down with his gun and gave as an excuse for this desecration of the Sabbath that the bear was a menace both to the flocks and the families of the neighborhood and ought to be killed, even on the Lord's Day. His excuse was favorably accepted by the elders of the church.



The other famous tree is the Washington elm which long stood beside the highway between Palmer and Wilbraham. It was under this elm that General Washington rested on the thirtieth day of June, 1775, when on his way to Cambridge to take command of the army.

The old Palmer "Journal," so long an important part of the town, is now the Palmer "Journal-Register," published by Mrs. Ethel F. Keller, widow of the former owner.



PALMER NATIONAL BANK

Palmer's two banks have native sons at their heads: Freeman A. Smith at the Savings Bank and Louis J. Brainerd at the National Bank.

The many former manufacturing concerns have dwindled to a few, of which the Wright Wire Company is the most important. This manufactures various kinds of wire cloth, trellises, flower bed guards and kindred articles. George M. Wright, the president of the concern, lives in Worcester.

The New England Metal Culvert Company, with Theodore A. Norman at the head, turns out a necessary and much used product for



this era of extensive road building. A. B. and J. Rathbone are at the head of the Pinion Wire Manufacturing Company.

One of the busiest and most useful of Palmer's citizens is David L. Bodfish, who has lived anything but a life of ease since he retired from the dry goods business which formerly occupied him. He acted for sometime as correspondent for the "Springfield Republican" and is in demand as a speaker on special occasions. He is well versed in both the past and present history of the town and is taking great pride in beautifying the Thorndike Street Cemetery.

A recent event in Palmer history was a dinner given by the Palmer Teachers' Association in honor of Clifton H. Hobson, who has been for the last twenty-five years superintendent of the public schools. Dr. George A. Moore, for seventeen or eighteen years on the Palmer school board, was the guest speaker and paid tribute to Mr. Hobson's outstanding service.



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*Russell, Which Includes Woronoco*

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## CHAPTER XVII

### *Russell, Which Includes Woronoco*

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The town of Russell is one of Westfield's daughters and belonged in the "New Addition." This extra land was added to Westfield in answer to a petition of the people of that town who wished for the land on account of its stone. Russell was incorporated in 1792, when it had about four hundred inhabitants. The territory lies south of the main branch of the Westfield River and the reason given for the petition of separation was the common one of difficulty in getting either to Westfield or Montgomery for religious and civil affairs. Probably the incorporation of Montgomery twelve years earlier had stimulated the movement among the citizens to the south. Tradition says that the name, Russell, was given in honor of a prominent citizen of Boston who was closely associated with public events, and who, in consideration of the honor thus bestowed on him, promised to donate to the first church society of the new town a bell for use in calling the settlers to worship.

Apparently the town was settled largely by people from Westfield. Two brothers by the name of Barber and a Mr. Gray were the pioneers and are said to have located on Glasgow Mountain. Other settlers quickly followed. The French and Indian wars were over and it now seemed reasonably safe to make homes away from the earlier towns along the Connecticut River. Nor was the region too lonesome a one, for the road of the Eighth Turnpike Corporation went from Westfield through the southeastern part of Russell to Falley's store in Blandford. Travelers on foot and on horseback, loaded ox-carts and horsedrawn vehicles, soldiers and pioneers settling farther west followed the turnpike and brought news from other places. The coming of the Boston and Albany Railroad changed the mode and route of travel, but was of benefit to local interests.

Before the bridge was built, in 1888, raw material for the mills was brought in by team and the finished paper carried out in the

same manner. The paper company kept seventeen horses for the work and when the roads were bad two pairs were used at a time. After the railroad trains were available sometimes as many as ninety people would leave Russell station on Saturday evenings for Westfield or Springfield and return on the midnight train.

Russell's 8,340 acres of land have been devoted chiefly to agriculture and the hilltops afford excellent pasturage. Lumbering was a leading pursuit in the early years and the streams furnished abundant waterpower for operating sawmills. The village which is the civic heart of Russell is called "The Center" and is especially attractive because of its tree-shaded streets. Here are small stores and shops and a hotel. The Blandford brick and tile works moved to Russell, but brought their raw material from the former town. This plant is now operated by the Westfield River Paper Company, manufacturers of glassine. Their dam was built by a man named Otis, about 1905, to furnish power for the Western Massachusetts Street Railway, a trolley line which ran from Huntington to Westfield.

Woronoco is also in the township and was formerly known as Fairfield. Its early name was Salmon Falls, which long ago lost its meaning as far as the salmon are concerned. The place first gained manufacturing prominence about 1875, when the Jessup and Laflin Paper Company began making paper there, but it remained for Roswell M. Fairfield to bring it to full development. He bought a thousand acres of land in 1887, including the massive stone dam and waterpower, with the right to draw additional water from Hazzard Pond, located among the hills at a height of six hundred and sixty-seven feet. Mr. Fairfield had a stock farm west of the village where he raised thoroughbred horses and fine cattle and he furnished considerable milk for the homes of the mill workers. A third of a mile race track was built on the property and traces of it may still be seen. By 1890 Mr. Fairfield was employing two hundred and fifty hands and turning out a fine line of linen and ledger papers, of wedding stationery and pasted bristol board in his clean, well-arranged mill.

If the bell promised to the first church established in Russell ever was hung in that place, it probably went to the Baptists, for they organized as an offshoot from the church at Westfield in 1786 and built a house of worship in 1792. The old meetinghouse was burned in 1820 and replaced four years later.

A Congregational Church was organized in 1800, but later its members affiliated with the Baptist and Methodist societies. This latter came into existence about 1818 and grew in strength and influence. 1869 saw the erection of an adequate church building for the society.

There was a great deal of dispute between Blandford and Russell residents over the boundary line between the two towns, and Chapter 32 of the Massachusetts Laws was passed in 1809 to settle the disputes. The act established the line as "beginning at a birch tree with stones about on Granville corner" and running to a "beech tree marked on the east and west side with a great number of marks and letters." This beech tree came to be known as the "Love and Unity Tree" when the disputants agreed to live in love and unity ever after. It stood on the high level land of the old Holliday Hill Farm, near an old wood road, and now only a stump remains, but the bound has been marked by a stone.

The center of Russell is occupied by a small but attractive pond about two miles in circumference, formerly known as "Hazzard Pond," but now called Woronoke Lake. The remains of a wolf pit in this region is a relic of one of the hazards. Summer homes have sprung up in this vicinity as well as in other parts of Russell and the Mountain Road is well known for its quiet beauty.

Horace A. Moses, the president of Strathmore Paper Company, has a fine summer home at the head of Woronoke Lake. Nearby several other officials of the company have their summer homes. In the southwestern part of the town is the Noble View Farm, which now is owned by the Berkshire Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club. Here gather hikers in summer and skiers in winter to enjoy the rugged beauty of this section. Nearby Pitcher Brook tumbles in two wooded glens to form the charming Little Pitcher and Big Pitcher falls. The largest pot hole in the county is located in Little River, near the junction of Pitcher Brook.

Considerable of the southern boundary of the town is formed by the deep narrow gorge of Little River, which includes some of the wildest scenery in the county.

At the foot of Mt. Tekoa is an old Indian burial ground, which can be seen from the main highway across the river. Punch Bowl Mountain was so named because of its bowl-shaped summit.



On Glasgow Mountain, or "Little Tekoa" as it is now called, is found a black serpentine rock which has been quarried to some extent. It contains so much iron that when pulverized it is sensitive to the influence of a magnet.

The Richmond Iron Company had charcoal works in Russell at one time and there were glove and shirt manufactories as well as other interests.

At Crescent Mills Village there was originally a flour mill about 1840. Later the Chapin and Gould Paper Company operated there and the village changed almost entirely to Polish residents.

The most widely known man who went out from Russell was probably Reuben Atwater Chapman, who became Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court in 1868. He was born of poor parents, who could afford him little in the way of education, but at the age of seventeen he earned some money by teaching in the district school of his neighborhood. Then he was employed as clerk in a store and joined a debating society. Here his native ability for argument and oratory was developed and he soon became known as one of the most promising young men in the vicinity. He studied law under General Alanson Knox, of Blandford, and was admitted to the bar in 1825. After trying a practice in several towns he settled in Springfield as partner of George Ashmun, the famed legal giant of the old bar. Mr. Chapman continued to grow in professional strength, but he also kept up his studies in mathematics and became proficient in French and German.

In 1882 a farm boy left Ticonderoga, New York, and went to work for the Agawam Paper Company at Mittineague. This was Horace A. Moses, who in 1905 was president of the Woronoco Paper Company when it took over the Fairfield Mills. Six years later the Woronoco Company and the Mittineague Paper Company were merged and became the Strathmore Paper Company.

The No. 2 mill, with about four and one-half acres of floor space, started work in 1913. It is a finely equipped mill with washers and beaters and rotary boilers, drying lofts and finishing rooms, and various devices to make the paper more uniform and to hold the moisture content without variation. The company is constantly on the lookout for better and more economical methods and is not afraid to invest money in improvements.



The two hundred and fifty-one employees of the Strathmore Company have an average output of 360,000 pounds of paper a week. Formerly this was all rag paper, but now a considerable amount of wood pulp is used. A fine grade of blue print paper is made and a popular rag content bond. A few cents a week are usually found among the rags, but it is some time since a twenty dollar gold piece has been found. The paper company owns fifty-five houses, which is almost all of Woronoco. These are rented to the married employees and the others are housed in Strathmore Inn, a very pleasant place of increasing popularity, where the food is good and the view up the valley is beautiful.

The Community Club has a fine building and a full time leader in charge of recreational work for all ages. The children have supervised garden work as well as supervised sports.

The Strathmore Company generates most of its own power in a hydro-electric station and a steam turbine plant, but is also connected with the New England Power Company. The flood of 1936 did little damage to the mills, which had only about a foot and a half of water in the basement, but at the hydro-electric station the water was eighteen feet deep. The generators were drenched and had to be cleaned and many instruments were put out of order. The river bank was undermined and the town water line broken, but the pipe lines to the mills held.

The population of the town of Russell rose to eight hundred and seventy-nine in 1890 and since that time has increased to around 1,400.



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*Southwick, and Congamond Lakes*

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### *Southwick, and Congamond Lakes*

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Southwick was originally a part of Westfield. The first settler, Samuel Fowler, came from that town in 1734 and built his home in what was then known as Poverty Hills. The barrenness of the soil gave the name to the region, but proper cultivation has increased the fertility and succeeding generations have produced good crops. Fowler's house is still standing on what is now the College Highway, the old road south from Westfield into Connecticut. It has a small room in the center built of brick and receives light only from the surrounding rooms. It is supposed that this was planned as a refuge in case of attack by the Indians.

Other settlers rapidly followed Fowler and about thirty-five families were settled in this region in the next twenty years. The people made the long journey to Westfield for Sabbath services and to attend town meetings for a long time, though as early as 1765 they petitioned the mother town to be set off as a separate township.

Three lakes, known as the North, South and Middle Congamond lakes are situated in the southeast corner of the town. They contain about six hundred acres. The project was early conceived of draining this area for the rich land which could be formed from its bed. This work was undertaken by a company in England, for whom Joseph Forward, an early settler, acted as agent. A canal, which can still be traced, was started in a northerly direction toward Westfield, but the project was found impracticable and was never completed. The ponds remain, surrounded by camps, summer cottages and bathing beaches, a source of pleasure for boating and swimming. Ice is cut from them in the winter and they are yearly stocked with fish.

These lakes or ponds received their name from the tribe of Congamuck Indians, descendants of whom still maintain their own colony in the southwest part of the town. Many arrowheads and toma-

hawks, as well as cooking utensils, have been found in this region on the farms and around the shores. The remnants of this well-known tribe number about a hundred, but have so intermarried with whites and negroes that they have practically lost their identity as Indians and are classed as mulattoes. There is a chief who is known as King Philip, but his title is one of name only. They do some farm work and their beautiful reed baskets are a source of income, but they are not, as a whole, thrifty and self-sustaining.

A Congregational church was organized in Southwick on August 17, 1773, and the following October Rev. Abel Forward was ordained as its pastor. He ministered to the people for thirteen years, for most of that time in the first meetinghouse, which was built about a mile south of what is now the center. As was usual in those times, the structure was raised and roofed and the people began to use it at once, hoping to complete it gradually. It is probable, however, that it never was entirely finished, for a new meetinghouse was built in 1783 at the Center.

Southwick was granted a district organization by the General Court in 1770, but its early records have been lost. One book came accidentally into the possession of a young woman who did not realize its historic value and she used its first pages for a scrap book. The little that was saved throws some light on the spirit of the people, for in 1775 they voted to supply the district with one barrel of powder and one hundred and fifty pounds of lead. On the same date it was voted "to give Amos Loomis nine shillings for seeping (sweeping) the meting hose, and feching water for crisning."

The original spelling in these records show the need of a school and the first one was built in 1771, near the old meetinghouse. It remained in that place until the Dickinson family gave land at the Center for a school site in 1845, and the building there erected received the name of the donors.

The cemetery was located by the old meetinghouse, where it received its first body, that of Elizabeth Hough, in 1770.

The approach of the Revolution gave to Southwick, as to a number of other towns, the chance to change from a district without representation to a town with full powers, and it was incorporated in 1775. It was named after Southwick in England, a town at the mouth of the Wear River. It had then a population of about eight

hundred and it at once voted the sum of fifteen pounds for schools. A road was laid out between Mr. Forward's land and that of James Smith, which is followed now by the College Highway. One of the first acts after the election of town officers was to raise a company of twenty-five minute men. The town declared in favor of independence and Jonathan Hare was sent as delegate to the Provincial Congress. A bounty of thirty shillings was offered for each of nine men to enlist in the expedition against Canada and later bounties were fifteen and thirty pounds. A large number of Southwick men were enrolled under Lieutenant-Colonel Shepard, of Westfield, and later many reënlisted and served at various periods, but the lists for the town are not complete. In 1781 Southwick had nine soldiers in the regular army under a \$1,000 bounty for enlistment and twenty shillings per month pay. The support of the Revolution impoverished this town as well as others, so that Daniel Shays had some followers among the citizens.

Previous to the Revolution a number of Baptist families had settled in Southwick. They were sometimes called "Separates" and they naturally sought to be excused from the support of the orthodox church, but without success for a number of years. They had "sittings" in the meetinghouse, but attended services of their own faith in Suffield. They organized a church of their own at the house of Augustus Pease, June 28, 1806, and called Elder Niles to be their pastor, but their church at Southwick village was not built until 1822. The Baptist Church kept close oversight of its members and a large part of the records are devoted to items about reclaiming the wandering or getting rid of the hopelessly unworthy.

The southern boundary line of Southwick is irregular, a part of it making a jog into Connecticut. Originally this tract was larger and extended laterally the width of the town and was claimed by Connecticut. A Mr. Moore, living on this tract, received a warning to a militia training in that State, but refused to appear and denied their jurisdiction. When the case was carried to the Connecticut Legislature it decided in Moore's favor. The people living on the east side of the pond chose to stay in Connecticut because of the difficulty of getting across to their business in Southwick, while those on the west side chose to remain in Massachusetts, and the land in question was so divided. Curiously, instead of the State line being established



through the middle of the long, narrow lake, it is along the east bank. A man who had never left the place of his birth was here a citizen of two states, a voter in four towns and a resident of three counties. When he was born the region was embraced by the town of Westfield, county of Hampshire and State of Massachusetts. Then the tract was thrown into the town of Simsbury, Hartford County, Connecticut, and the next change placed it within the lines of Granby. It finally became a part of Southwick in Hampden County and so remains.

In the Civil War the town is credited with having furnished one hundred and eight men for the Union Army and two for the navy out of a total population of 1,155 persons. Its population is now 1,540 and forty-six men saw service during the World War.

A tavern was opened on the main highway in 1780 by Saul Fowler and in the same building he kept a small stock of goods for sale. The present hotel is maintained in the same place. Sawmills and gristmills were early established, and one run by Raymond Fletcher, near the depot, turns out a fine quality of rye flour as well as whole wheat and bran.

The region has for many years been known for its shade-grown Havana filler tobacco. The annual visits of the buyers are an event, but the town has its dealers as well as growers. There was formerly a wagon shop and a cigarmaking industry. A century ago Amasa Holcomb had some fame as a maker of telescopes. He cast and ground his own mirrors and lenses and sold his instruments at about one-quarter of the price of imported telescopes. A powder mill was located in Southwick about 1800 and increased until 250,000 pounds, mainly for blasting purposes, was being produced annually.

John Boyle settled in Southwick in 1826 and was a contractor on the New Haven and Northampton Canal, which can be traced easily across the town. Starting at the State line the big ditch lies plainly visible just east of the railroad tracks. At Congamond Lakes the west bank was used for a tow path up to where the road crosses. North of the road the old canal is still filled with water. A floating tow path was built for about seven hundred feet across the middle lake to use in towing the canal boats over to the west bank. From there interesting traces can be followed to the north end of the lakes.



Just north of the lakes five locks were used to drop the canal to the level of the Westfield River valley. Most of the masonry is gone—probably into nearby house foundations—but the sites are easily discernible. Here the waterway route swung northeast to cross the Feeding Hills Road just west of Great Brook. A half mile north the canal crossed the brook and leaves the north boundary of the town close to the east bank of Great Brook.

Sodom Mountain, in the northwest part of Southwick, rises to a height of 1,126 feet and Mt. Provin on the east has an elevation of six hundred and ninety-five feet. Here is located a large trap-rock quarry which operates the year around, the products being sold both in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

An Italian colony of industrious and prosperous people is located in the southeastern part of the town. Though clannish, they are eager to learn and are a credit to the community.

A Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1825 and obtained the meetinghouse then standing at Gillett's Corner.



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*Tolland for Hunting and Fishing*

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## CHAPTER XIX

### *Tolland for Hunting and Fishing*

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An Act of the Legislature passed June 14, 1810, reads in part as follows: "That the West Parish in Granville, in the county of Hampshire, as known by its present bounds, be and hereby is incorporated and established as a separate town by the name of Tolland, with all the powers and privileges, and subject to all the requisitions of other towns, according to the constitution and laws of this commonwealth." This was the start of Tolland as a town, which already had about eight hundred inhabitants, but now has less than two hundred.

It is a region of hills, some of them reaching an elevation of 1,200 to 1,700 feet, and lies in the extreme southwest corner of Hampden County. When set off from Granville the new town took from the mother territory more than one-third of her lands and a like proportion of her population. It is about six miles long by four and one-half miles wide. Two stories of the origin of the name have been handed down. One tradition is that it originated across the ocean in Wales and means "hilly country." The other is that it is an Indian name meaning high hunting and fishing ground.

A group of men called the Bedford Company, who had bought the land which included Granville and Tolland from Atherton Mather, offered their holdings for sale and succeeded in interesting some settlers from Durham, Connecticut. A few of these men who settled the Middle Parish of Granville gradually found their way over into the hill regions of the West Parish. No reliable record is found to tell who was the pioneer, but it is known that some families made settlements about 1750. One of these was Jabez Rogers, who had ten sons and two daughters.

These married in subsequent years and were responsible for some of the increase in the town's inhabitants.

Thomas Twining was another of the early settlers and some of his five children married and remained in Tolland. His brother Elijah, who came in a little later, added eight children to the population. Titus Fowler was one of the first settlers and also a leading man in the colony. James Hamilton, whose family name has been known in the town in succeeding years, had six sons, three of them full grown men when they came into the region with their father about 1750. John Manchester had four sons and Pierce Marshall five to carry down the family names.

A reminder of early days is an old stone house which tradition says was built by Deacon Rose for a fort as a protection against the Indians.

The cheapness of the lands was the principal inducement which attracted settlers to Tolland. The hills furnished an abundance of grazing, so that around 1850 large quantities of butter and cheese were sent to market. The large tracts of forest lands have not been lumbered to the extent they would have been if there were streams of sufficient size to raft logs and lumber on. Shingles were made for a time and a furniture factory was carried on by Charles Marshall in the north part of the town. A small tannery was operated on Farmington River by Albert Hull and that used some of the local hemlock bark. A good deal of maple sugar was produced also, but farming has been the main industry.

The Congregational Church of Tolland dates its history from 1795, when a few of the scattered inhabitants gathered together and organized a society in the west parish of Granville. In the course of a year or two the small flock courageously erected a meetinghouse and were saved the long trip up and down hills to the middle parish. Reverend Roger Harrison was installed as the first pastor in 1798 and remained in that position until he was dismissed in 1822. He was also postmaster and town clerk and represented the town in the Legislature two or three years. He continued his residence in the town until his death at the age of eighty-four years. It was in this part of Granville that Reverend Gordon Hall, the author and first American missionary to Bombay, was born and he prepared for college under Mr. Harrison's teaching. He died of cholera in India in 1826. No minister was "settled" in Tolland for some years after Mr. Harrison ended his pastorate, but the church had "supplies." Reverend Alonzo

Sanderson, a native of Whately and a graduate of Amherst, was installed in 1852. The church was never strong in numbers and finally it was made a "yoked field" with the West Granville church. A Baptist Society was formed in the "south quarter" of the town about 1830, but it never built a church.

After Tolland was set off as a town in 1810 it established five school districts and built in each a schoolhouse.

Noyes Pond is a beautiful sheet of water which lies north of the town's center. Here is a State reservation and it also is the location of a private hunting and fishing club. About thirty cottages surround the pond and the club has a tennis court and golf course, as well as facilities for canoeing and bathing. Cranberry Pond is a tiny bit of water lying south of the Center. Chestnut Hill used to deserve the name, but in recent years the blight destroyed all the fine trees of that sort. Noyes Hill rises to a height of 1,700 feet near the southern part of Otis Pond and it is said that from its summit one can see on a clear day, with the aid of a telescope, the spires of forty churches.

Tolland Post-Office sits the highest of any post-office in Hampden county, its 1,540 feet elevation putting it ahead of Blandford Center by about forty feet. Apart from Tolland's hills its finest scenic spot is the Farmington River Gorge on its western border. The natural beauty of this ravine is delightful and the rock formations are full of interest. At certain places may be found footprints of birds and pre-historic animals, such as have attracted attention in other parts of the county.





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*Wales, With Its Early Varied Manufactures*

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## CHAPTER XX

### *Wales, With Its Early Varied Manufactures*

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Few people have had a chance to live in three different towns and two counties without moving from one spot, but that was the case with the early settlers of Wales. They were in Hampshire County until Hampden County was set off in 1812, and were in Brimfield until South Brimfield was separated from the mother town. The next change came when the West Parish became Wales in 1828.

Settlement in old Brimfield is believed to have begun soon after 1700, but probably a quarter of a century passed before an adventurous pioneer made a permanent location in the southern part of the town. Anthony Needham was evidently one of the first settlers and his wife, Molly, was sister of the four Moulton brothers, who came to the region soon after. The Needhams had eleven children, six of whom were sons. One of them, Captain Anthony Needham, gave excellent service during the Revolution and married Rebecca, sister of the four Munger brothers, also early settlers. John Bullen went south along the Brimfield Road which led into Connecticut about the same time that Anthony Needham did and the two, with their families, were probably the only ones living in what is now Wales for over a year. Bullen had Lot 28 and Needham Lot 29, both located near Wales Pond. Anthony Needham had lived some time in the older part of Brimfield before moving southward in 1726, but originally he and the Mungers and Moultons are supposed to have come from Salem.

John Shaw came from Grafton in 1752 and settled in what has since been called Shawville, at the upper end of the village. Shubael Dimmick left Connecticut about 1750 and settled east of the pond, where he set up a sawmill and gristmill on Mill Brook.

Another prominent man of the early days was Captain Asa Fisk, whose first home when he came from Connecticut was the old Wales Tavern stand, where he followed innkeeping and farming. Later he

bought a large tract of land on high ground at the southern end of the town, which was afterward called Fisk Hill.

Humphrey Gardner and his family left Palmer because they were bothered by witches there. He traded farms with Seth Shaw, of Wales, who didn't seem to be afraid of the witches.

Whether or not the pioneers who went south from Brimfield withdrew partly because of religion we do not know, but they seem not to have been entirely in sympathy with the "standing order" as the Congregational Church was sometimes called. November 22, 1734, eleven persons signed off from the parish, saying: "We whose names are Underwritten Do own and Acknowledge Ourselves to Be of that persuasion commonly Called Anabaptists." Ebenezer Moulton was the leader in this affair and, though not then a regularly ordained minister, he officiated as a preacher. This statement freed the signers from taxation for the support of the orthodox church, provided they maintained services of their own, which they evidently did. Moulton was ordained pastor in 1741 and this was the eighth Baptist church formed in Massachusetts. It had only twenty-six members, not all definitely settled in their beliefs, so that they had many troubles. Only eighteen Baptist churches were founded before 1763. When Elder Moulton tried to preach in Sturbridge, in 1749, he was arrested by the constables and put in jail as a vagabond.

A petition from Anthony Needham and others, dated 1757, for liberty "to build a meeting-house in the highway that leads from Brimfield to Stafford in the most Convenient place, near the New Dwelling-house of Ebenezer Moulton," may mark the time of the erection, but no records can be found and it may not have been built until three years later. This Baptist church stood until 1802, when its proprietor sold it to the town. The following year the town held a vendue and the old building was sold in fourteen separate sections for the sum of \$105.80.

South Brimfield voted to build a meetinghouse in 1763 and hire Ezra Reeve to preach to the settlers. This was for the use of the Standing Order, of which there were many in both the East and West parishes, and consequently many meetings were held to decide on the project and especially the location. A site about midway between the two parishes was finally chosen and the frame erected. But before it was roofed the people awoke to the fact that in trying to accom-



modate both sections they were accommodating neither and the work was abandoned.

From about 1780 on a number of the people of the town became believers in the doctrine of Universal Restoration. Reverend Elhanan Winchester, who had relatives in the town, was apt to preach there when he made his frequent visits, and his writings were extensively circulated and read. A group of Universalists, or Restorationists, as they were formerly called, was organized and held occasional preaching for some years.

While the Baptist meetinghouse was being demolished, a new one was in process of construction close by. It was built by the town, but the pews were sold at public auction to defray the cost, the town reserving the right to use the building for town meetings. Each denomination was to have the Sabbath Day use of the meetinghouse a number of days in proportion to its purchase of pews, with the proviso that any Sunday it was not used the Baptists might rightfully occupy it. By the first apportionment thirty-two Sabbaths were assigned to the Baptists, twelve to the Universalists and eight to the Congregationalists. It remained a union house until 1846, when it was wholly taken over by the Baptists.

The Methodists organized in Wales in 1830 and built their church two years later. The first pastor was Reverend Horace Moulton. Sometimes the preachers divided their services between this town and Monson.

South Brimfield was incorporated as a district in 1762 with all the duties and privileges of a town except that of sending a representative to the General Court. This right was granted them in 1775, when Massachusetts asserted her independence and raised a number of districts to the standing of towns.

One of their first votes as a district was to hire Dr. Isaac Foster for preaching in the east part of the town. And to show that they were ready to look after themselves they voted to buy "two quires of paper" to record births and deaths. A few months later they voted "to provide a place to have smallpox in" and "that those taking infection repair within the lines."

Samuel Moulton is thought to have been the first innkeeper on the Wales Tavern stand. The first town pound was located in his barnyard. An interesting vote was to build a pound "with stones"

forty feet square, four feet of wall at the bottom, two feet at the top, and with a six-foot gate having lock and key. Only forty dollars was appropriated to pay for all that. A later pound with wooden fence, which was located on the west shore of the pond, was used until about 1865.

The name of South Brimfield remained until 1827, when the town voted it should be changed to Clinton, but this did not give complete satisfaction. Moreover, word had gotten around that James L. Wales, a prominent citizen, had planned to leave the town a generous sum in his will, and at the next meeting of the General Court the name of South Brimfield was changed to Wales. The population showed a gradual increase up to 1880, when it reached its highest point of 1,030 inhabitants. The shutting down of the mills brought about a great decrease in the population, which in 1930 was only three hundred and sixty.

Reverend Elijah Coddington was installed as the fourth pastor in 1773 and remained with his people for fifty-seven years. He taught school a number of seasons and was chaplain of the State Militia for ten years. During three consecutive years of his pastorate he baptized over two hundred people.

Dr. Thomas Green is the first physician's name to be found on the town books. He was a resident and a landowner, but for several years was supported by the town. Dr. James Lawrence came from Connecticut about 1746 and located in what is now Wales, rather than in the center of Brimfield, because he considered it the "smarter" of the two places. He successfully continued in his profession until he died of smallpox at the age of fifty-eight.

The people of Wales have mostly engaged in agriculture, but enough shops were established in early days to take care of their needs and enough manufacturing in later years to bring some cash into the town and furnish employment for many hands. Boots and shoes were made in a half dozen small shops, which reached their peak of production in the 'fifties, when over 40,000 pairs were turned out in a year. Phineas Durkee started a small tannery in 1752 and different men carried on the business down to recent years. Zeno Farrington, Jr., had an extensive tannery in 1853 and at times finished as many as 3,000 sides of leather and calf skins each year. Pot-ash was made from the plentiful wood ashes and a soap and candle

factory added to the welfare of the village. Sawmills were common and the "Valley Mill" was at one time a box shop. A few wagons, carriages and farm tools were made. The "Eden Shaw" mill at the upper village produced doe skins from 1866 to 1869, and later made cloths of various kinds. Cotton batting was manufactured by Dunham on Mill Brook. William P. Osborn started a wicking factory, and then with Needham as partner, made plow handles, farming tools and shingles. This plant eventually passed into the hands of Elijah Shaw for whom "Shawville" was named. The Shaw Manufacturing Company started in 1847 and has helped to give the town the prominence it has received in making satinets, cassimeres and other grades of cloth. When the business of cloth manufacture was at its height in Wales about three hundred and fifty workmen were in regular employ.

The F. M. Day Company has the only factory now running. Forty people are employed and as much as 8,000 yards of goods turned out each week.

Over a thousand acres of land in Wales are included in the Brimfield State Forest and a Civilian Conservation Corps camp is located there. Nearly a half of the town's 10,000 acres are in woodland. Mt. Pisgah has an elevation of 1,240 feet. The lesser heights are Mt. Hitchcock, Mt. Grandy and Mt. Warner.

In the southwestern part of the town is "The Gulf," a locally known scenic spot that can be reached by a pleasant walk of about a mile. In the same section is the thirty-foot Tuppet Counterfeiters' Cave with its local legend.

In 1885 the sale of medicinal and aromatic herbs and roots brought \$905 into the town. Other industries were the making of charcoal, cider and brick. An old tannery is still standing on the Harrison G. Royce place. There are about two hundred acres of peat bogs from four to ten feet deep in Wales. Before 1840 the peat was often used for fertilizer.





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*West Springfield, Home of the Eastern  
States Exposition*

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## CHAPTER XXI

### *West Springfield, Home of the Eastern States Exposition*

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A fact often forgotten by people in thinking of the settlement of the Connecticut Valley is that the first house was built on the west side of the river. William Pynchon himself had visited the locality and picked out the site to be occupied by his company of pioneers. Then John Cable and John Woodcock were sent on ahead from the Bay to build a house so that the first families to come might find a shelter awaiting them. On being told by the Indians that the location chosen by Pynchon for his village was subject to overflow from the river, and because the cattle of the whites encroached on the cultivated land of the redskins, the plans were changed and the mother settlement started anew on the east side. But Cable and Woodcock occupied the house and improved the land in what came to be known as "house meadow" all that first summer, probably returning to Roxbury in the fall. That was in 1635 and it was not until 1653 that the proprietors made the first allotment of the rich farming land on the west of the Great River. For some years after this the meadow lands were cultivated or hayed and the rest used as pasture with only an occasional brave settler establishing his home there. The house meadows and pasture lands had few residents earlier than King Philip's War, as the men returned each night to the protection of Fort Pynchon and the stockade on the east side. The Indians frequented the tracts even after they had parted with their title and were often a source of annoyance to the whites.

Canoes, made by scooping out the trunks of large trees and shaping them like a skiff were the first means used for crossing the river. Rude flatboats later carried over horses, cattle and carts. The usual manner of propelling the larger boats was by the use of "setting-poles." In flood time the water was too deep and ran too swiftly for

these boats to be used. Crossing on the ice was done when possible in the winter, but there were many times when the new settlers on the west could not cross the river for Sabbath services, or people get to them from the east side. By 1674 the people on the west side had become so numerous that one flatboat could not carry them all over in time for the preaching, unless some started very early, with a consequent wait in the cold meetinghouse. There were long waits on the river banks, too, and the Sunday garments were sometimes soaked with rain. They petitioned the town for free ferriage, but this was not granted. On March 18, 1683, several persons were drowned when returning from church.

There were thirty-two families and more than two hundred persons on the territory in 1695 and they considered themselves sufficiently numerous and prosperous to support a minister of their own. Several years previous they had requested separation without success, but on May 29, 1696, the General Court established the second parish of Springfield and authorized the employment of a minister. An argument used to gain a separate parish was that crossing the river was an undue resort to labor on the Sabbath. In answer to that Springfield replied: "necessary Travell is Lawful on the Sabbath. As for servile labor: We count it as Lawful to Row in a Boat, or paddle a Canoe, or bridle and saddle a horse. Works of necessity are works of the Sabbath." In response to the argument that the crossing of the river occasioned discourse inconsistent with the holiness of the day, the reply was: "We say if they find themselves guilty they must mend as fast as they can and not bring their failings for an Argument in matters of this nature."

This division of parishes brought up the matter of ratings to pay the minister, the new parish refusing to pay any longer its assessed share for the Springfield services, and those living on the east side, but cultivating land on the west side, refusing to assist where they did not attend. The General Court had this matter to settle also.

The first meetinghouse stood on the common and was occupied in 1702, six years after the parish was set off. No doubt preaching services were held in the homes until the meetinghouse was ready. It was a most unusual structure, forty-two feet square and ninety-two feet high. There was a steep hip roof on each side of the building covering the high first story, and then what seemed to be a miniature



duplicate of the lower part was perched on the center of the roof as a start for the steeple. Topping that was a still smaller reproduction of the first story, which came to a point surmounted by an iron rod. This supported a huge vane of sheet iron and above this was a weather-cock. The windows were of diamond panes set in lead. The floor of the building did not rest on the sills, but on separate supports built up from the ground, and it only came to the bottom of the sills, so that people stepped over the timber and down on entering. There were fifteen pews along the wall and two rows of seats fronting the pulpit, one row for the men and one for the women. The galleries were supported by pillars and the whole interior was open to the second story, exposing to view beams, studding, rafters and outside boarding. The building was clapboarded, but never painted. The timber for it was prepared from trees grown on the commons. This meetinghouse was used for a full century and stood for one hundred and eighteen years before it was torn down. There never was a fire kindled within its walls, and though the sermon ran to "seventeenthly" the people could but endure. A drum called the congregation together and a fine was imposed on such as absented themselves without just cause.

The first minister was Reverend John Woodbridge, descendant of seven others of the same name and profession. His wife, Jemima, was a granddaughter of the celebrated missionary to the Indians, John Eliot. Mr. Woodbridge's salary was £80, to be paid in part by provisions, and he was given a house and home-lot of three acres and the use of the ministry land of sixty acres. He was an able man, a graduate of Harvard College, and filled the pastorate for twenty years.

The still unsold lands originally belonging to Springfield were divided among the townsmen in 1707, each male person who had completed his twenty-first year sharing in the apportionment. The several localities were given distinguishing names, Agawam on the south; the Street district, now West Springfield, and the Chicopee Plains, which included the northern part of the town and the present city of Holyoke. As early as 1654 school lands had been set off on Chicopee Plains and the proceeds devoted to school support, and a school is supposed to have been opened on the west side of the river several years before the Second Parish was established. In answer

to a petition from the Second Parish, Springfield voted, in 1706, that a schoolhouse be built under the supervision of Deacon Parsons, Samuel Day and Samuel Ely; and later that a "meet person" be provided to teach children to read and write. A few years after that Benjamin Colton received twenty pounds for one-half year's teaching. Another was given fifteen pounds for a half year, with permission to take a fortnight out of that period for his harvest and getting in his hay. Practically nothing is known about the early schoolhouse or houses until a two-story wooden building was erected on the common in 1752.

In addition to the expense of maintaining their families and their church the people paid taxes for the necessary expenses of the town of Springfield, of which they were still a part, and there was a rate fixed for supporting the Colonial government at Boston. Massachusetts is one of the few states of the Union that assesses a poll tax and the custom evidently goes back to an early day. Instead of having a fixed sum as now, the value of the poll was rated according to the earning capacity of the individual. If a man was old and infirm or disabled he might not have to pay any poll tax, but they ran from eight to twelve pounds ordinarily.

The old parish records show how difficult it was to secure a new minister and what trouble and expense they went through. Sometimes one or two men were sent to Boston with instructions to bring back a minister and at other times the parish more thriftily voted to send by somebody who was going that way on business. In the first case the expenses of travel were paid by the parish and usually a small sum added for the men's time. In the second case they would pay only the expense of the minister as he came back with the messenger.

The second minister was Reverend Samuel Hopkins, whose wife was a sister of the notable Jonathan Edwards. By some he is said to have been "heterodox," but he served the people honorably and well for thirty-six years. Maple sugar was introduced to the public through a pamphlet published by him in 1752 giving an account of the Indian way of making it. His headstone in the old cemetery in West Springfield reads: "Here rests the Body of Rev. Samuel Hopkins, In whom, sound Judgment, solid learning, Candour, Piety, Sincerity, Constancy and universal Benevolence combined to form an excellent Minister, a Kind Husband, Parent and Friend."

The ministers were, in general, men of decided ability, of education, and often of superior culture. They had received all the training the universities could give and were able, even noble leaders. Religion was the motive power of both minister and people and not commercial gain. With their piety the ministers brought their learning and their trained habits of thinking. With their learning they brought their books, in some instances considerable libraries. They were formal and reverent without being morose, and did not consider it a sin to laugh and joke. Few were fine orators, but they kept abreast of the times and made their opinions known in no uncertain terms.

The question of "seating the meeting-house" was a vexing one here as well as in other towns. One vote was "that the seators should observe as a rule to do their Worcke by to consider Persons Age," and another that it should be "by men's Estate." A lot in Agawam meadows is still known as the "Seatin' lot" from the fact that the committee, while resting from their work at noon, gathered under the elms and seated the meetinghouse.

The first doctor in the west parish was John Van Horn, a native of Springfield, who graduated at Yale College in 1749. He was a skillful physician and practiced his profession over fifty years. He was a scholarly man, fond of literary pursuits and was prominent in public affairs. In the later years of his life he imagined himself incapable of making any effort whatever, so took to his bed, where he remained under the constant care of an attendant for four years. Dr. Seth Lathrop, son of an early pastor, studied medicine under Dr. Van Horn and became his assistant, a common practice years ago. Lathrop was over six feet tall and imposing in figure, his very appearance inspiring confidence. He was very successful in his profession for his good practical common sense supplied the want of an extended education.

Dr. Timothy Horton, whose father was a physician before him, was a practitioner of considerable ability, a man of means and public spirit, noted for the extremely small charges for his services. His regular fee in his own neighborhood was twelve and a half cents per visit and he was frequently known to go four or five miles, spend considerable time in consultation on the call of another doctor, and only charge a shilling.



Reverend Joseph Lathrop, a graduate of Yale, was the pastor who followed Mr. Hopkins. He filled a ministry of sixty-three years and was one of the most remarkable divines that ever spent their life in the Connecticut Valley. He wrote 5,000 sermons in his long pastorate, seven volumes of which have been published. Over six hundred people were admitted to the church while he was minister, and he baptized 1,266 children, whose parents were members. After graduating from Yale College he taught school in Springfield and pursued his theological studies under the pastor, Reverend Mr. Breck. Reverend John Hooker, of Northampton, gave a "preparatory lecture" for Mr. Breck at that time and made a great impression on the young student, who ever afterward spoke of him in terms of unqualified praise. A few weeks after Mr. Lathrop was examined and licensed at Suffield, the parish knowing that he was considered a young man of more than ordinary promise, asked him to supply their vacant pulpit and he remained with them until his death. In May, 1759, mindful of the fact that it is not good for man to be alone, he married Elizabeth Dwight, youngest daughter of Captain Seth Dwight, of Hatfield.

One of Dr. Lathrop's sermons was preached from the text "When thou comest into thy neighbor's vineyard, then thou mayest eat thy fill at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel." It was occasioned by some one getting into his garden and carrying off his watermelons just as they were ripe. Mr. Lathrop had secured the first seeds in the region and naturally preached a blistering sermon.

Dr. Lathrop received many tokens of public respect and confidence. In 1791 he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Yale College and, in 1811, from the Cambridge University. He was elected fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and was chosen professor of divinity at Yale. He assisted about twenty young men in their preparation for the ministry. Dr. Lathrop wrote with a quill, turning it 'round and 'round, so that one lasted for several sermons. He lived with great economy and no carpet was in his house for many years. He always dressed in black and when his coat faded a tailoress came to the house and turned it. For twenty years Dr. Lathrop visited Mr. Howard, minister of the First Church in Springfield, twice a week, usually riding over on horseback. Madam Lathrop was a good housekeeper and on every day in the



year, except Sunday, a boiled Indian pudding was served at her dinner table.

Dr. Lathrop once related an amusing description given by a child after attending its first meeting in those early days. She said "the men were all shut up in large pens, and there was a man a hollerin' up in the chimbley, and on the roost was a lot of gals squallin'!"

Dr. Lathrop's eyesight failed as he grew older and in 1818 he requested the parish to provide him with a colleague. From that time on he rarely took part in public services, but his last appearance was only two months before his death, when he made a prayer at the funeral of John Bagg, who was burnt to death in a distillery. He died as he had lived, full of peace and hope, in the ninetieth year of his age, having been in the West Parish sixty-five years.

The meetinghouse, built in such elaborate style in 1702, had been several times repaired, and after nearly a century of use it seemed better to build anew than to repair again. Perhaps a satirical poem of Dr. Lathrop's, where he referred to the geese and the cows as occupying the structure on week days that the people had to use on the Sabbath, somewhat hastened matters. Once the parish had decided to build, the usual controversy took place as to location, and it was only when John Ashley came forward with a donation of £1,100 for "the support of the ministry on condition that he should be permitted to choose the building site," that the matter was amicably settled. With rare good judgment he chose a beautiful location on a hill, where they built in 1802 a plain white colonial church with a graceful spire. It still stands on what is now known as Mount Orthodox. The contract price for the building was said to be \$1,400 and ten gallons of St. Croix rum, valued at about sixty dollars. No rum was used, but the money was divided among the workmen. Captain Timothy Billings, then only twenty-eight years old, was thought by some not to have "beard" enough for such a work. He replied that "skill and courage were more necessary than beard."

The raising took place while a vessel was being built on the common and the men there employed assisted in raising the steeple. The story is told that when the steeple was complete and the vane which resembled a sturgeon adjusted, some waggish men assembled at the tavern of Rufus Colton, got a rich treat out of the landlord. They told him they had made a bet for the drinks, to be paid when the bet

was decided. That was satisfactory to him and the drinks were consumed. Then he was told that one side had bet that when the church steeple fell it would go to the north, and the other side that it would go to the south. The landlord enjoyed the joke, but the bet is still unpaid.

In the year 1727 there were five persons, all men, baptized by immersion in the town. The minister who performed the ceremony was Reverend Elisha Callender, of Boston. Some years later they, with others who had joined them, were formed into a church with Reverend Edward Upham as pastor. This organization struggled along for some years before it finally lapsed into oblivion.

West Springfield, though long considered mainly as good farming land for Springfield settlers, gradually came to be important in other ways and even seemed likely for a time to dominate the mother town. In 1770, so strong was the west side element that they came within a few votes of carrying a motion to have half the town meetings held on their side of the river. The next year they tried, but without success, to have a grammar school held in their domain for one year. Three years later they had grown sufficiently strong in numbers so that they were able to adjourn the March town meeting soon after it opened and voted to hold it two days later on the west side. This was actually done and the aristocrats of Springfield had a chance to see what it was like to cross the Connecticut in March for the sake of attending a town meeting. A few sympathizers were on the east side of the river and the final result of a series of turbulent meetings, first in one center and then the other, was a resolution to call in advisers from the outside. This committee made an elaborate report in May, saying that they considered it "a Great Unhappiness that the most Antiant and Respectable town in the County of Hampshire, the wise and peaceable Conduct of whose public affairs has ever to this Day Done much Honour to the Inhabitants and established a just Veneration for their leading men, should by Means only of the supposed or Real Indiscretion and Mistakes of a few persons be Reduced to the necessity of a Division." The decision of the committee that a complete separation of the two parts of the town was not necessary did not settle matters, for meeting after meeting followed, and plan after plan was put forward and turned down. Finally, Springfield became apprehensive that it might become only part of the west side

and preferred to lose that portion of the township rather than lose the central government, and West Springfield found itself, by Act of the General Court, made into a separate town in 1774. This was something they had not desired or worked for, but in the interests of peace it was thrust on them and they immediately rose to their responsibilities.

The territory thus set off included a stretch from Mt. Tom on the north to the Connecticut State line on the south, a distance of about twenty-five miles, and having an average width of more than six miles west from the river. It was one of the finest farming areas in the region and until after 1812 its population exceeded that of Springfield. In the year immediately preceding the organization of the town two companies of minute men had been formed and were regularly drilling on the common. This common or "green" was a busy place and has played a vital part in the life of the town. The eastern end, nearest the river, was often used as a shipyard. The schooner "Trial" and the sloop "West Springfield," both about sixty tons, and sloop "Hampshire" of ninety tons, were all built there and sailed down the river. The old meetinghouse, which not only sheltered Sabbath worship, but was the scene of so many turbulent town meetings, was on the common, as well as a clapboarded schoolhouse of two stories. It is perhaps best known and will be longest remembered for its beautiful elm trees. Some of these were set out by Heman Day, and one in particular, which came to be known as "The Big Elm," is associated with his name. He brought it out of the West Springfield meadows on his shoulders and set it out on his twenty-first birthday, January 27, 1776, and enjoyed its luxuriant growth for sixty-one years. When it was a hundred years old it measured twenty-seven feet in circumference and its branches had a spread of one hundred and twelve feet.

Going eastward from the common to the river and the old ferry was "Shad Lane," so-called because of the great supply of shad there. According to the local West Springfield chronicler, Sewall White, a single man could take with a scoop net a thousand in a day, and he records seeing one hundred fine salmon lying together on the bank of Heman Day's and Tilly Merrick's fishing place, one of them weighing forty-two pounds. On another occasion, using the roe of a shad for bait, he had in a single morning thrown on the shore, while standing in a fish boat, eight fine bass. The largest he had ever



caught weighed twelve pounds, but a neighbor captured one that weighed twenty-two pounds.

One day in Shad Lane, when Jonathan Parsons was driving his two yokes of oxen and a horse, attached to a load of stalks, two horsemen overtook him with the order to turn out for General Washington, whose coach was making for Springfield ferry. Parsons refused, probably doubting the couriers' word, and declared he had as good a right to the road as the general. While the coach was waiting for the boat Parsons overtook it and heard the general say: "That man was right. He had as good a right to the road as I had."

When the news of the British attack on Lexington reached West Springfield the minute men were ready and made an immediate response. Both companies marched to Boston and on return from their short service the majority of the men reënlisted and served for various periods in several localities during the war. Captain Levi Ely's company of West Springfield men was a part of Colonel Brown's Berkshire regiment, taking part in the disastrous affair at Stone Arabia, where both Colonel Brown and Captain Ely were slain.

Tradition says that during the Revolution the common was the temporary camping ground of two British armies. One was that of General Amherst and his force of 7,000 men, who are said to have encamped there for two days' and nights' rest, while on their way to Canada. The other was that of General Burgoyne's captive army on its retreat from Canada to Boston. The Hessian prisoners reached West Springfield on October 29, marching in rain, snow and hail. Some of them were received into the homes of the people and were objects of prolonged and curious scrutiny, it even being suspected that a small admission fee was charged those who came from a distance to inspect the foreign prisoners. General Riedesel was the guest of Dr. Joseph Lathrop. He did not speak English and the parson did not know German, so they conversed in Latin. When the troops moved on, about a dozen of the Hessians remained behind and took up their former occupations as farmers, cobbler, miller, mason and weavers. One was a physician and afterward followed his profession in Blandford and Chester. Dr. Brewer was called over from Springfield to attend some of the Germans and as the paymaster's chest was empty he was given the chest itself in payment.



Within a few years after the close of the war and before the town had recovered from the conflict, the common was the training ground of another force of men. These, irritated by heavy taxes and depreciated currency, sought to overthrow the authority of the State government, to abolish the courts, and to administer the laws according to their own ill-conceived notions of justice and right. One of the leaders of the insurgent forces was Luke Day and a numerous following came from among the inhabitants of the town. The prime mover was Daniel Shays, of Pelham, whose men were known by the sprigs of hemlock they wore on their hats. The period was one of great excitement for plans were made to capture the government arsenal at Springfield. Captain Day insisted on divulging the secret of the proposed attack to Parson Lathrop, whose judgment he valued highly. In return he received this rebuff: "Captain Day, your army is deficient of good, true and trusty officers. You are engaged in a bad cause, and your men know it. I advise you to disband and let them return peacefully to their homes, for as sure as you advance on the public stores, 'tis as certain that you will meet with sore defeat." But Day did not take this good advice and his four hundred men and boy soldiers, in the intervals of drilling, became a nuisance in the town, even spreading such a feeling of panic by their petty depredations that some families left their homes. Shays sent a messenger to inform Captain Day that the attack on the arsenal would take place on January 25, 1787. Day sent back a message to the effect that he could not reach that destination until the following day, but this message was intercepted, so that when Shays made his famous attack, Captain Day and his forces were held back by the militia on guard at the river crossing. After Shays' defeat, General Shepard, who had command at the arsenal, sent a strong detachment against Day's horde and quickly drove them from the town. The citizens, in anticipation of a battle, had nearly all fled toward Tatham and Amostown, but Day and his men showed no inclination to fight and retreated at once up the river.

This ended the uprising, the excitement soon subsided and the people returned to their homes and their work. The next big project which interested them was building a bridge across the Connecticut.

For a century and a half the inhabitants of the old town had been separated by the river, which in freshet time swept over the meadows.

Crossing by the three ferries was often dangerous, sometimes impossible. A bridge had been talked of and delayed for years. Some said they might as well think of bridging the Atlantic Ocean. Others said that if a bridge was built it would never stand. Finally, after much hesitation, the seemingly ponderous job was undertaken. Two abutments and five piers had to be embedded in the river, and by men without previous experience or the use of modern appliances. Pile driving was done by horsepower, as steam hammers were not then known to the world. A large floating platform was constructed and anchored in the river near the site chosen for a pier. On it was fixed the necessary machinery for raising the hammer. This was operated by a horse winding a rope around a drum or cylinder. This horse "swung around the circle" from morning until night, day after day, from spring to early winter. On the platform was a stable used as a shelter at night, for he slept "on the bosom of the deep" until his work was finished. The site of the bridge did not occupy the place of any ferry, nor was it within fifty rods of any road or highway. It was 1,234 feet long, thirty feet wide, and was forty feet above low water mark. It was uncovered and painted red.

The bridge was opened for travel with an imposing dedication. When the procession reached the bridge it was greeted with the national salute of seventeen guns fired three times. The 3,000 people present gave three rousing cheers and all the bells nearby were rung. There was music and a prayer and sermon by Reverend Dr. Lathrop. During the construction several of the workmen were injured by an accident and one was killed. Two "icebreakers," piers with sloping up-stream sides, were built to the north, designed to break up the immense sheets of ice which might injure the bridge in the springtime. In spite of this protection the bridge showed signs of weakening in a few years and on July 14, 1814, the first span crumpled and went down while a Pennsylvania wagon heavily loaded with army supplies was crossing. A curious detail of this bridge was that the passers went up and down with the curve of each of the six spans.

The bridge long known as "The Old Toll Bridge" was constructed in 1816 by Captain Isaac Damon, of Northampton. It was partially carried off by the spring freshet of 1818 and the lost portion supplied in 1820. A lottery furnished the money for this structure. An advertisement at the time read: "Who will complain of Hard Times

when \$1,500 may be had for \$3. The Drawing is near at Hand." Tolls were charged on the bridge until July 1, 1872, when it was made free by an Act of the Legislature.

The most important of West Springfield's villages is Mittineague, an Indian name meaning "swift water," which lies about a mile to the west of the town center. In the hollow along the stream are a number of paper mills. Here, in 1850, was organized a Congregational church. Two years later the unused meetinghouse of the Methodists was moved from its original site to Mittineague and became the home of the new Congregational society. Another outskirt is Tatham on the extreme western borders of the town. This community claims the oldest and most beautiful white oak tree to be found in New England. In early times the highway passed close by its trunk and a sharp eye can still trace its path. Over this route Burgoyne's army marched and the tree is known as the Burgoyne oak. It has a circumference of twenty-nine feet and an immense spread of branches. Its age is estimated at over five hundred years and it still stands on what was originally a Pynchon grant to the Smith family, early settlers of the region.

Amostown is a locality near the geographical center of the town and Ashleyville in the northern part has some fine farms and market gardens bordering on the Connecticut. Its name came from one of its early prominent families.

The hamlet which grew up near the end of the toll bridge perpetuated an old family in its name of Merrick. At one time it had a post-office of its own and the extensive works of the Springfield Glazed Paper Company, which was incorporated in 1873, did much to build it up.

Bear's Den is located on the Paucatuck, or Black Brook, in the western part of the town. The road to it makes a steep descent into an irregular glen and in the gloomy depths of the ravine a little stream tumbles over the rocks in a charming cascade. In a hole in the rocky hillside was a real live bear as late as 1891, but unlike the one that gave his name to the place, this one was shut behind a lattice of strong iron bars. Not far away is the famous Massasoit Spring, whose water is as cold as if it came from the regions of eternal ice. This was a favorite drive for refreshment on a Sunday afternoon in the



'nineties, or for dinner at the old Massasoit Springs House. Now only the foundation remains and the ruins of the bear's den, but the pretty cascade and spring are still there and supply the West Springfield Reservoir.

The site taken by the government for the West Springfield Post-Office was formerly the home of "Squire" Lathrop, son of Dr. Lathrop, the minister. The house was built sometime before 1750 and had a huge central chimney and eight fireplaces. In the attic was an immense wooden wheel, which appeared as if built in when the house was constructed. It was at least six feet in diameter and mounted on strong beams, so that it was readily turned by a crank. It was used for drawing water from a well which was located directly below it. This house was supposed by some to be the Parson Lathrop house, but a letter found by a great-grandson of his states that the parsonage faced the commons about opposite the original church and was torn down in 1840.

The Passionist Monastery building, owned by the Catholic order of that name, is located on Monastery Avenue, off Riverdale Street. This fine building, standing on a pleasing height, is used as a retreat house and thousands of western Massachusetts residents have passed through its doors for week-end retreats. Its chapel and other rooms are well appointed and up-to-date.

The West Springfield Library was built in 1915 as a gift to the town from the Carnegie Foundation. It had open shelves, and was completely furnished and ready for the 15,000 books. The records show that in 1884 ninety-nine persons patronized the library, then housed in a small room in the town hall. In 1894 it was removed to a larger room on the second floor of the town hall, but the stairs proved a barrier to rapid growth. Special gifts to the library included a fund for nature books in memory of Daniel Granger White, former librarian, who was a lover of flowers; a fund for the purchase of Bohemian books given by Josephine Porkoney, who was born in Austria, but lived in West Springfield for thirty years, and gifts from Mrs. Martha Ludington and Mrs. Lillian Williamson.

The town's one hundred and fiftieth anniversary was celebrated in June, 1924. It started with a band concert on the common and markers placed on the site of the first church and the first schoolhouse were dedicated. Exercises were held at the library and at the Day House



and there was dancing on a central roadway. The day following was especially for the children and included an historical pageant at the Eastern States Exposition grounds. An anniversary ball was held at the town hall in the evening. The last day's celebration included the industrial and civic parade, a cavalcade to Brush Hill to dedicate a marker in memory of Justin Morgan, of Morgan horse fame, and a motorboat parade on the river which had played such a large part in West Springfield history.

Justin Morgan, a farmer and singingmaster, lived in West Springfield between 1747 and 1788. From this town he went to Vermont, taking with him a mare and her colt, which furnished the start of the famous Morgan horses. The United States Department of Agriculture has established at Middlebury, Vermont, the United States Morgan Horse Farm, which furnishes mounts for the national cavalry as well as for individual riders.

Dr. Mahlon Loomis, of West Springfield, proved his theory of wireless telegraphy in 1866. He was anxious that his own country should reap the benefits and honors of his discovery and urged Congress to take action, but it was just after the Civil War and other matters absorbed their attention. In 1870 he organized the Loomis Aerial Telegraph Company, Inc., and the papers were signed by President Grant. The project never got much farther and Mr. Loomis died in 1886 without realizing his dreams.

Among the many interesting place names in West Springfield are Cayenne, off Morgan Road, named by Henry Pepper; Arrisslittle in Mittineague (arriss means stubblefield in England); Nonesuch Meadow, a peat meadow west of Brush Hill; Rum Road, where years ago Moses Ashley lost a barrel of rum when driving up a steep hill; and the Seatin' Lot in Agawam Meadow, where an important discussion on seating the meetinghouse took place.

The Agawam Canal Company built their first dam in 1836 and a second dam a few years later. In 1839 Wells and Edward Southworth built the first paper mill in the town. Their original agreement forbade them to build on the property any chemical laboratory, powder mills, furnace or forge, or "other works obnoxious or unsafe." They were also forbidden to maintain a livery stable or tavern or any place to sell liquor. The first mill was a frame structure which

was destroyed by fire in 1879. A brick mill at once took its place and has since been built around and added to.

The Mittineague Paper Company was incorporated in February, 1892, largely through the efforts of Horace A. Moses, who had been superintendent of Agawam No. 1 mill. Mr. Moses, whose former home was Ticonderoga, New York, soon had his new company a leader in manufacturing fine papers, and various other lines were started, such as artists' papers, boards and fancy covers.

The Mittineague and Woronoco companies merged into the Strathmore Paper Company in 1911 and eventually had seventy-five definite products on its list.

A little known event in the papermaking world was the successful attempt to create paper from the life-everlasting plant. Its sponsors figured that women and children could easily gather this flower which grew wild on the waste lands of New England and it could be substituted for rags, which they feared would grow scarce and expensive.

When the population of Springfield was no more than 20,000 people, a small company was established to manufacture a new device called a gas machine. From that humble beginning rose the huge and busy plant of the Gilbert and Barker Company, now located in West Springfield, a plant known throughout the country and abroad for its modern gasoline pumps, storage tanks, measuring devices and a host of other specialties.

It was C. N. Gilbert, who came from the West to Springfield, in 1865, with the novel idea of organizing a gas machine company to produce illuminating gas for commercial and domestic consumption. Although something entirely new and, therefore, a risky venture, Gilbert succeeded in interesting local capital, with the result that the first New England portable gas machine company got under way. Shortly before the outbreak of the Civil War, J. F. Barker had come to the city and taken a position as a mechanical engineer at the United States Armory. He early evinced an interest in the new company and was offered a job, which he accepted.

Barker went into this work with open eyes. He knew the dangers present in those early gasmaking machines. While at the armory he had taken charge of one and had received a severe shock in an accident which came close to blowing up part of the place.

Illuminating gas was still a new and dangerous toy at this time. It had been discovered in 1785, and London, England, had been lit up by it as early as 1815. Yet there had been little development of the gas industry until Drake's invention, in 1850, of a machine for producing gas from benzole, which in turn was distilled from coal tar by an expensive process.

The first machine manufactured by the New England Portable Gas Machine Company, as it was then called, was a strange affair, working on the principle of gravity. It was located in the attic and there generated gas. This gas, after it had a chance to unite with air, fell by its own weight through pipes to the chandeliers below. In a short time this contrivance was succeeded by another equally as odd. In this second machine the gas was generated in the cellar and forced up by a meter weight invention.

These gas machines were apt to have sudden explosions and caused a great deal of damage. Insurance companies or underwriters would have nothing to do with it, or if they did the rates they charged were almost prohibitive. The early story of the Gilbert and Barker Company is one long and constant campaign to convince the underwriters that gas machines were safe enough to warrant ordinary rates of insurance.

The first home of the New England Portable Gas Machine Company was in the front half of a basement in which was located the Lamb Knitting Machine Company. The whole factory occupied no more space than two good sized rooms and the payroll figures would hardly suffice for one of the company stenographers today.

This brick building was at the corner of Spring and Lyman streets, a region which differed a great deal from what it is now. Along the grade near St. James Avenue and the Boston & Albany tracks ran Garden Brook and at the spot where was located the Converse Coal Company there was a dam formed by Nettleton Pond. Part of the overflow from the dam crossed on Lyman Street diagonally to Worthington and on to Main, flowing beneath a rude plank walk, and here an angler with patience might pull out a fair sized trout. Between Dwight and Chestnut streets a vertical flume and circular saw had been built by Emerson Wight, which received its power from the water and supplied the railroad with wood. At the same time the remainder of the water provided power for the New England Port-



able Gas Machine Company, this water being carried directly by a flume across Spring Street.

It was not long before the Lamb Knitting Machine Company moved to Chicopee Falls and the gas company took over the whole three floors. For a time the very existence of the company was precarious, since there was not sufficient business to anywhere near fill the three stories. There were other discouraging obstacles. Men with sufficient technical experience were hard to get. The public mind had not been attuned to gas consumption, and was wary because of the frequent explosive accidents which had happened. The company was afforded a breathing spell, however, when petroleum, which had been discovered in 1860, was placed on the market. It was almost immediately obvious that gasoline could be substituted for benzole in the manufacture of the gas and at a greatly reduced cost. In addition, the use of gas furnaces in connection with gas machines widened the company's field somewhat and the immediate crisis was over.

For some time Mr. Barker tried various experiments for greater safety without success, but finally hit on the idea of placing the generator in an underground vault or pit, lined with brick, and far enough away from the building so the gasoline could evaporate without danger. A new machine was built on the basis of this idea. It is not generally known that Hiram S. Maxim, who had come to this city from Maine as a draftsman, made the original drawings of this new machine which was to revolutionize the industry. Later, Maxim, after repeated rebuffs by the military authorities of the United States Government, gave his famous invention, the Maxim gun, to the British Government and was knighted for it by King Edward, and he later gained the Legion of Honor for his smokeless powder discovery.

The association that Mr. Barker formerly had with the armory now stood him in good stead. Through it he was able to secure the installation of one of the new and improved machines at the Water-shops and its complete success was enough to send him to Washington in possession of a letter from Colonel Benton. He there proved that the new machine was a necessity for the public service and welfare and through much effort was finally able to take out patents on the inventions.

From this point the company enjoyed a new lease of life. It was reorganized into the Springfield Gas Machine Company with the



same men at its head and business increased rapidly. There was, however, the same stumbling block which had been present before—the insurance companies were unconvinced as to its safety despite the turn that affairs had taken and refused to underwrite the new machine. The United States Board of Underwriters not only designated a prohibitive premium, but considered seriously a motion not to allow the assuming of any risks where a gas machine was in use. A measure such as this would, of course, mean the doom of the company and Mr. Barker, with characteristic energy, quickly rose to the occasion and finally obtained permission to address the board.

One by one he ran through his arguments without having visibly impressed the insurance group and strangely enough his last argument, and the one that saved the day, was that if naphtha were used in gas machines it would not be used as an adulterant. The board, although reluctantly, admitted that perhaps it had taken the wrong view of the matter after all.

With this signal triumph the business was now on a solid foundation. There were still difficulties to be reckoned with. Everything which was used in the manufacture of the new machine had to be made on the spot, as it was not possible in those days to have various parts made to order and shipped merely by writing to some large factory. The problem of efficient and highly-trained technical help still existed. But aside from these ripples the business was well on its way toward success and in 1870 the present company of Gilbert and Barker was formally launched.

There was one more storm to weather. In the panic of 1873 money was at a premium, and frantic people, trying desperately to keep themselves from being wiped out, could get only one dollar in gold for every \$2.75 in greenbacks. In Springfield alone two-thirds of the business concerns took advantage of Federal laws allowing general bankruptcy. Gilbert and Barker felt the pinch badly and were on the verge of capitulating more than once, but the company managed to hold on and ultimately paid dollar for dollar.

After this period business improved steadily and was aided materially by new developments in the technical field. In 1880 a mixing regulator was used, whereby the admission of air was introduced in such a way to make the gas uniform in quality and made possible the use of ordinary batswing burners and later the Welsbach burner.

Another advantage appeared ten years later when oil burners and oil burning systems came into use for forging, welding and hardening, and the company had become so strong that it added this new field to the line and became a foremost manufacturer in it.

The greatest individual change to shape the destiny of Gilbert and Barker was the change from horse-drawn vehicles to automobiles. This opened up a tremendous field which the company was quick to take advantage of, and the Gilbert and Barker gas tanks and pumps came into quick and plentiful demand as gasoline stations and distributing stations grew like mushrooms all over the country. In 1914 it moved to the West Springfield location near the Boston and Albany buildings and today it is one of the largest industries in the vicinity of Springfield.

Besides the Gilbert and Barker Company other manufacturing plants are: Wico Electric and Manufacturing Company, makers of igniters and other electrical appliances; the Strathmore Paper Company and the Southworth Paper Company, manufacturers of high grade paper; the Springfield Glazed Paper Company, manufacturers of glossy finish paper; Boston and Albany Railroad shops for locomotive and car repairs; West Springfield Chemical Company, producers of chemicals; New England Box Company, which turns out boxes and other articles made of lumber; Perkins Machine and Gear Company, which turns out gears and other machine products; the General Fibre Box Company, makers of corrugated paper boxes; the National Library Bindery Company and the Springfield Wire and Tinsel Company.

During the past few years many of the automobile dealers of Springfield have moved to the west side of the river and opened automobile salesrooms and repair shops. These are located along Memorial Avenue and it is sometimes referred to as "Automobile Row."

The Hampden County Improvement League grew out of a movement first started by Horace A. Moses, the head of the Strathmore Paper Company. He had a vision of improving agriculture and rural living conditions and a desire to bring city and country into a better understanding of each other's problems. Mr. Moses, with the aid of other public-spirited citizens throughout the county, began organization work in 1912 and the following year the first extension work was started in New England.

This was two years before the Smith-Lever Bill made State and Federal money available for this kind of work in any of the Northern States. Thus, the Hampden County Improvement League started out wholly on private funds secured through donations and memberships and built such an effective organization that it was used as a model for other counties when public funds were assigned to them. It was the pioneer in this type of work, though other places, through chambers of commerce and local financial aid, had employed "county advisers" and they had begun work with boys and girls and women.

As the work grew and its value became apparent Hampden County with other counties sought additional funds to meet the growing demands on it. Now the county aid to agriculture law, first passed in 1918, allows the county to finance the entire budget.

When the United States entered the war in 1917 a branch of the extension service was organized in Holyoke. Its main work was that of operating a canning kitchen, where special training was given in preserving food. Later other phases of homemaking were added and finally the Holyoke Home Information Center was opened. Springfield now has a similar organization.

Under the Hampden County Improvement League the boys and girls are working in over twenty different kinds of 4-H clubs. The H's stand for health, heart, hand and head, and include live stock projects, sewing, canning, room improvement, forestry, wild life conservation and many other subjects. The men in rural regions are learning better farm practices and business management, while the women are taking up matters running from child training to recreational activities. The work is largely carried on through trained local leaders and hundreds are enrolled yearly. The league has a substantial building on the grounds of the Eastern States Exposition.

The Eastern States Exposition movement was started in 1912 by a group of widely known citizens representing all sections and interests of New England headed by Joshua L. Brooks, of Springfield. They wished to develop agriculture, industry and commerce, and felt that the best way to show strength or uncover weaknesses was by comparing results. Springfield seemed a logical center with the final result that the Eastern States Agricultural and Industrial Exposition grounds were located just over the river in West Springfield. A charter was secured in 1914 and the National Dairy Show was invited to hold its



1916 meetings and exhibition in connection with the dedication of the proposed new plant.

The requirements for this big show included an auditorium large enough to seat 5,000 persons, an industrial building containing at least 60,000 square feet, and barns large enough to stall 1,000 head of live stock. By the appointed date, even greater accommodations than those specified had been provided in permanent buildings of brick, steel and concrete, and the National Dairy Show held the most successful exhibition it had ever put on.

In June, 1917, one hundred and twenty-two firms and business houses coöperated in holding an industrial and export exhibition, such as has never been equaled in New England. The first general show



SPRINGFIELD COUNTRY CLUB

was held in October of the same year, with an attendance of 138,000 people, and featured food conservation and war programs.

The government took over the exposition grounds and buildings the following year and until midsummer of 1919 the plant was used as a military storage depot. The annual fall exhibitions were resumed when the property reverted to the management at the close of the war and have been continued since without interruption. The exposition plant now has eleven permanent brick, steel and concrete buildings, thirty other buildings, and covers one hundred and seventy-two acres of ground.

Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts have constructed attractive buildings on the Avenue of States to house their



respective exhibits. Other states are making plans for similar buildings.

A unique addition to the beauty and interest of the exposition is the collection of Colonial buildings known as Storowton, the gift of Mrs. James J. Storow, of Boston. These buildings, attractively landscaped and grouped around a common, simulate a country village and will perpetuate for all time the best of our early New England architecture.

The first to be erected was the Gilbert house, which was built in West Brookfield in 1794 by two brothers. The timber was hand hewn and put together with wooden pins and handmade nails. Like the other buildings, which have since been brought to Storowton, it was taken down board by board, and beam by beam, and every board and beam numbered so that it might go back into its original position when it was set up again. A huge chimney occupies the center of the house and fireplaces open into most of the rooms, several of which are sheathed with unpainted pine.

The little lawyer's office, with its green blinds and rounded roof, came to Storowton from Middleborough, where it was built by Zachariah Eddy about 1800. It still contains his furniture and books.

The old Potter house is a veritable mansion and was built in the "North Precinct" of Brookfield about the time of the Revolution. Captain John Potter did most of the work himself and made all the nails, latches and hinges and cut the elaborate woodwork. The hall upstairs has an arched ceiling and was used for dancing and public gatherings.

The town of Whately produced the red brick schoolhouse, which was built of local bricks about 1810, and from Chesterfield, New Hampshire, came the granite blacksmith's shop with its hand bellows and forge and heavy sling for shoeing oxen.

New Hampshire also provided the village with its meetinghouse, which stands quite suitably on a rise of ground at the head of the common. It has panelled wainscoating, pews of unpainted pine and a white pulpit with overhanging sounding board.

The oldest structure in Storowton is a little cottage from Taunton, which was built in 1767, and serves as office for the Home Department of the exposition.

The town house, which was originally a Baptist meetinghouse, originated in Southwick, and the Atkinson Tavern, which contains a

country store as well as a tap room, came from Prescott in the Swift River valley, which is to furnish Boston's water supply. A reconstructed old barn in the village is the scene of many gatherings and dances.

The Eastern States Exposition has a growing number of exhibitors and with its many buildings represents an investment of over \$3,000,000. Every year, on the third week of September, it attracts an audience of over 300,000 visitors drawn from every State in the Union and from Canadian provinces. Joshua L. Brooks has served continuously as president since its organization in 1912.

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*Wilbraham and Its Academy*

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## CHAPTER XXII

### *Wilbraham and Its Academy*

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What is now the town of Wilbraham was a part of the territory of Springfield, the settlement of which was begun by William Pynchon and his associates ninety-five years before the settlement of Wilbraham. On the east side of the town was a strip four miles wide called the "Mountains" or "Outward Commons of Springfield."

For fear that Sir Edmund Andros, Governor of Massachusetts, would take away the charter of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, as he threatened to do, and thus cause all unappropriated lands to revert to the crown, the inhabitants of Springfield, in 1685, after reserving three hundred acres to the ministry and one hundred and fifty acres for schools, divided the remainder of the "Outward Commons" among the one hundred and twenty-three heads of families in the settlement. The territory was divided into three portions and then the lots numbered from one to one hundred and twenty-five. The numbers were drawn from a box like a lottery, and at the same time was drawn from another box the proprietor's name.

Game was abundant and continued to be for a long time. Deer filled the pastures and the woods; wild turkeys ran in flocks over the fields and hills; the ponds were covered with ducks; and the squirrels on the trees filled the air with their chattering. Muskrats swarmed on the banks of the streams and beavers built their dams across them. Beasts of prey were not abundant, but sometimes bears made their appearance, much to the annoyance of the first planters and the terror of their children. It was not uncommon for devout aunts to still the restlessness of the children who were left in their care by telling them that the bears would come and carry them away into the woods and eat them.

Not many Indians inhabited this territory when the village was settled, but a family lived at a place since called Indian Rock and

frequently came to the tavern in the village for supplies. There must, however, have been a large number about at some time for quantities of spears, arrowheads, axes, hatchets and soapstone dishes have been found in the fields. The dishes were made from some soapstone boulders probably deposited in the glacial period and the tools were pieces of trap-rock brought from the Holyoke range. Three Indian fireplaces have also been found on top of a hill, in a triangular position, about twenty feet apart. They were made of stones, none larger than a person's head, laid in a circle leaving a space in the center about twenty inches across. One was still well filled with the ashes of many fires.

The story is handed down from around 1740 or 1750 of a little girl who was riding with her parents on a sled near the close of a winter day, when they saw a short distance ahead, three Indians come out of the woods and stop in the road. The frightened child cowered under the blankets, but the father drove right on to where the Indians were standing in the snow by the side of the road, and each was holding out his hand and saying "tobac," "tobac," "tobac."

In 1727 Nathaniel Hitchcock purchased part of the lots drawn by John Hitchcock and three years later came from Springfield Street and cleared and broke up two acres of ground and built a log hut. After sowing his two acres with wheat, Hitchcock returned to Springfield Street with his young wife to spend the winter.

In May, 1731, he came again with his wife to his narrow field and low hut and lived there by the mountains a full year, with no neighbor nearer than Springfield Street. Nine miles from friends he planted his corn, gathered his wheat, mowed his grass, dried and stacked his hay, and husked and stored his corn under the roof of his cabin. The following spring Noah Alvord and his wife settled near and the two neighbors often worked together with ax or hoe. Gradually, but one by one, others followed and Moses Burt, an industrious weaver and reed-maker, came to the region, probably in 1733. Samuel Warner settled on Stony Hill, Daniel Lamb on the Bay Road and Thomas Merrick, father of the young man bitten by a rattlesnake, immortalized in song, took up a piece of land.

Few and scattered as the settlers were they were not indifferent to the education of their children. When there were but eleven families in the "Outward Commons," Springfield appropriated three pounds

for the support of a school there. The Testament was the text book in schools, as well as the oracle in the church. Dilworth's spelling book was their guide in spelling, nothing was taught of geography and little arithmetic. Instruction was given in the houses of different families in turn. These houses were plain framed houses, the saw-mill at Sixteen Acres supplying the lumber. They were poorly finished, scantily glazed, rarely even partially plastered, and meagerly furnished. But the pioneers were hardy and industrious and prosperity as bounteous as they expected was their reward. The cleared fields were small and insecurely fenced. The penurious soil did not make large returns, at best, for their labor, and the bears and squirrels shared the scant harvest. The settlers were far from store and mill and there were no roads for wheel carriages, nor did they have any to use. From the sides of the mountain the friendly smoke of the settlers on the banks of the Great River could be seen rising above the trees, but between there spread out an unbroken forest, with swamp and meadow and a placid pond. The way was long and difficult to the meetinghouse by the river and snows blocked their path in winter. When Sunday morning came, Daniel Lamb could comfortably make his way along the Bay Road to the sanctuary, but the others, some on horseback, their wives on pillions behind and a child on the pommel before, and some on foot, started in the early morning for the meetinghouse nine miles distant, by way of Pole Bridge Brook over Stony Hill, entering the Bay Road near Goose Pond. The young men and maidens preferred to walk and sometimes the way up to Zion seemed all too short to them; but the elders wearied of the trip, the briers were sharp, the swamps were miry, the fords were insecure, and the storms were drenching. Nor was it only by storms they were drenched. One winter Sabbath morning, Miss Peggy, clad in her best, was riding her horse across a shallow marsh when the thin ice broke and she fell into the freezing water. The place since then has been known as "Peggy's Dipping Hole."

In May, 1740, twenty-six names were signed to a petition sent to the Bay for incorporation as a separate precinct, and Springfield and Longmeadow Precinct having given permission to their setting off "for the benefit of the gospel ministry," consent was received so that there would no longer be "a dearth of the word of



the Lord" on the "Mountains." There was joy in the homes when the success of their petition was known and the ax was plied more vigorously now that there was prospect of building a meetinghouse. The dwelling house of David Mirick was the scene of the first precinct meeting and William Pynchon came from Springfield to be moderator. The subjects before them were the choice and settlement of a minister and the location and erection of their house of worship. Six different meetings were held in the next two months. One of the difficulties was to decide the amount to be paid to the minister, as coin was "variable and uncertain as to its value." Finally, the "current market price" of wheat, Indian corn, rye, barley, oats, flax, beef and pork was the basis agreed on, and the minister was to be paid one hundred pounds a year for the first four years with an increase later. The deed of the "Overplus Land" given for the first settled minister of the precinct was considerable trouble as signatures of the heirs of the one hundred and twenty-five original proprietors of Springfield had to be secured. Noah Mirick, who had already preached a number of Sabbaths for them, was asked to be their first settled minister and they agreed to "cut and boat" a sufficient quantity of timber for him to build a dwelling house on a spot which he should choose.

When we recall how few were the residents and how poor their possessions the salary offered Mr. Mirick seems generous, but evidently he was not quite satisfied, for another vote was taken to "hew, frame, and raise" his house. In the meantime, as was usual, advice as to their choice was asked of neighboring ministers, and two of the settlers journeyed to South Hadley, where three divines gathered for the purpose, expressed their approval of Mr. Mirick. He accordingly accepted the position, though in his letter to the fourth precinct which had called him, he says that the matter "looks dark enough" and their "encouragements" are but "small."

Plans were soon made for the ordination, which for some reason they first voted should be held at Springfield, but finally a large oak tree was selected as the proper place and a rude pulpit of rough boards was built and seats of boards and logs arranged around it. The morning of the great day in June came, but it was cloudy and lowering. Delegates had come from Hadley, Springfield, Longmeadow and Brimfield, and the grave council was gathered in one of the houses while the people waited by the oak. A long delay came



because it was discovered there were only six church members in the new precinct and the rules stated there must be seven. At last grace was given to one man, who stated that he had long thought of joining the church. His name was accepted to make up the required number and the delay was over, but in the meantime the gathering storm had increased and the audience adjourned to a neighboring barn, where the services were carried on and the "Worthy Mr. Mirick" ordained and settled as pastor.

Now began the struggle of the people to pay what they had pledged, first of all the cost of the ordination service, which included the building of the temporary pulpit, and the entertainment of the "ministers, scholars and delegates" and their horses over night. Another weighty matter under discussion was the location of the meetinghouse. After considering the matter for a month and holding four meetings they had only decided that it should be set somewhere on the "Over Plus Land," which was a strip across the precinct from east to west, four miles long and eighty-two rods wide. So once more the precinct turned to outside towns for advice, this time choosing a man each from Somers, Brimfield and Enfield. They duly viewed, listened, deliberated and agreed, with the result finally announced that the meetinghouse should be set by a small, black oak tree marked by a cross, southerly of a "run of water," a few rods west of the top of Wigwam Hill. This hill had received its name from the fact that it had been the home of the last Indian in this vicinity—a squaw who lived alone, the last of the vanished race.

Apparently the citizens dutifully accepted the decision and turned their attention next to building the minister's house. Nothing seems to have been donated in this parish and every man was paid for his work or it was credited on his tax. Mr. Mirick was soon occupying his house, and in the winter of 1743 various men drew pine boards, quarter boards, cedar shingles and "spruce shingles without sap" up to Wigwam Hill for the building of the meetinghouse. Farm work evidently occupied them during the warm months, and in the meantime a faction arose which wanted the house of worship set by the "West Road," a half mile away from where the timber lay seasoning, and from the minister's house. Committees were called in from neighboring towns to advise, votes were taken and retaken, money was paid out for temporary places to hold services; men were entertained

and paid for riding around to view the spots under discussion, and for four years the timbers lay rotting on Wigwam Hill. One vote advised building there near a "pine tree," another "at a walnut stable," but finally when a "fast stone" marks the place work is begun and the meetinghouse was ready for occupancy late in 1747. Charles, son of Isaac Brewer, was baptized there on December 25, 1748, and the following month a precinct meeting was opened in the meetinghouse, but adjourned to Nathaniel Hitchcock's house, probably because it was too cold for the transaction of business, though they might have stood it if warmed by the fervors of religion.

There is no record of any dedication service and the building was a mere shell for three years. The timbers of the frame were all exposed on the inside, the seats were loose boards or slabs with legs in them; the pulpit was a rough box; not a trowel of mortar nor a bit of paint was anywhere to be seen. The boards on the floor were loose; little glass was in the windows, the winds whistled through the crevices, and the snow drifted over the seats. Not until 1752 was it voted to further finish the meetinghouse, by "ceiling and plastering" to make it warm.

From the door of the church the whole valley of the Great River from Mt. Holyoke and Mt. Tom on the north to Hartford on the south was visible, a white cloud of fog lying low along the tree tops indicating the course of the stream. When the frosts touched the forest in autumn, how the red maple flamed among the trees, and the green of the pines and the yellow of the walnut caused the whole vast landscape to appear like a gorgeous carpet. On Sabbath morning the people wound their way through field and bridle path and cart road to the meetinghouse, some coming from Burt's Mill, five miles away; some from the hill south of Scantic. The procession, on horseback and on foot, had only one wagon, that of Paul Langdon, who generously took in others than his own family. The horses were hitched to the trees about the meetinghouse during service. The congregation rose from their benches as the worthy Mr. Mirick entered with wig of powdered hair in a cue, dressed in small clothes and bands and silk stockings with shoe buckles of silver. He read a hymn, then handed the book—the only one—down over the pulpit to Deacon Warriner, who "lined" it out to waiting people. The congregation stood during the long prayer, and sparrows above and babies below

punctuated the lengthy sermon. The congregation stood again while the minister passed out, and then ate their picnic dinners in the summer time on the logs and stumps nearby and in the winter visited the neighbors' houses. An afternoon service followed the nooning and then the pioneers wended their various ways home.

For sixteen years more the meetinghouse was in process of being completed and by that time the roof was leaking badly and repairs were needed. In the meantime, as soon as pews were provided, came the problem of "seating" the congregation, which took as many votes as did the location of the site for building. Persons were often dissatisfied with the seats allotted to them, thinking that honor enough was not shown to them. One disgruntled woman carried a chair to the meetinghouse on Sabbath days and sat in the aisle near the pew where she felt she belonged. In 1760 the whole population of the precinct seems to have been under four hundred people.

The first record of a road laid out by Springfield for the precinct is in 1744. Little work was done on any road at this time except to cut away trees and bushes, make rude bridges and pick out a few stones.

Before 1754 a schoolhouse was built nearly opposite where the present Congregational Church now stands. The name of Ezra Barker, usually called Master Barker, an early teacher, has come down to us bearing a multitude of his traditions with his rod, of the pranks of the boys and the tricks of the girls. For years he was both town and church clerk and was an excellent penman.

Literary productions of this period are few, but a celebrated poem on the death of Lieutenant Mirick's only son by the bite of a rattlesnake, he being twenty-two years of age and "very nigh marridge," has come down to us. This elegy of "Springfield Mountain" was written by Nathan Torrey, of Springfield, about 1761, in commemoration of that tragic occurrence which caused a great local sensation at the time. It was sung to the tune of "Old Hundred" at the centennial celebration in Wilbraham, being "lined out" by Judge Henry Morris:

"BALLAD OF SPRINGFIELD MOUNTAIN

"On Springfield Mountains there did dwell  
A likely youth who was knowne full well  
Lieutenant Mirick's onley sone  
A likely youth nigh twenty one.



“One Friday morning he did go  
into the meadow and did moe  
A round or two then he did feal  
A pisin sarpent at his heal.

“When he received his dedly wond  
he dropt his sithe a pon the ground  
And strate for home was his intent  
Caling aloude stil as he went.

“tho all around his voys wase hered  
but none of his friends to him apiere  
they thot it wase some workmen calld  
and there poor Timothy alone must fall.

“So soon his Carful father went  
to seak his son with discontent  
and there his fond onley son he found  
ded as a stone a pon the ground

“And there he lay down sopose to rest  
with both his hands Acrost his brest  
his mouth and eyes Closed fast  
And there poor man he slept his last.

“his father vieude his track with great consarn  
Where he had ran across the corn  
uneven tracks where he did go  
did apear to stagger to and frow.

“The seventh of August sixty one  
this fatal axcident was done  
Let this a warning be to all  
to be Prepared when God does call.”

A more metrical version of the story, apparently put out somewhat later, was often sung. The ten verses are as follows and were divided by a chorus of “Turiluri-turilay, sing turiluri-turilay-i a”:

“On Springfield Mountain there did dwell  
A nice young man, I knew him well.

“On Monday morning he did go  
Down to the meadow for to mow.

“He scarce had mowed half round the field,  
When a pesky sarpent bit his heel.



"He raised his scythe and struck a blow,  
Which laid the pesky serpent low.

"He took the serpent in his hand,  
And posted off to Molly Bland.

" 'Oh, Johnny dear, why did you go  
Down to the meadow for to mow?'

" 'Oh, Molly dear, I thought you knowed  
'Twas father's field and must be mowed.'

"Now this young man gave up the ghost  
And did to Abraham's bosom post.

"And thus he cried as up he went,  
'Oh, pesky, cruel, sar-pi-ent.'

"Now all young men, a warning take,  
Beware of the bite of a great big snake."

The agricultural products of the town were becoming more varied and abundant by this time, and the houses were more convenient and more comfortable in the winter season. Still there were bare floors, bare walls, scant furniture and the oaken table and chest and pine settle were the chief adornings of the frugal homes. There was one marked exception, however. Ensign Abel Bliss is said to have gathered in the south part of Ludlow and Belchertown pine knots and hearts, called candle wood by our forebears, and used to illuminate their houses. These he burned in a tar kiln and realized a thousand dollars from his two hundred barrels of tar. With this money he built a house which was the admiration of all the people. The plan was so pretentious that the pastor preached a sermon on the text "Build not your house too high," and the rebuked Abel went home and cut off the upright posts of his house seven inches.

As early as January, 1749, because of the distance from Springfield, the citizens in this precinct began petitioning to be set off as a separate township, but it was fourteen years before the fourth parish of Springfield was made into a separate town and took the name of Wilbraham. The Indian name of the region was "Minnechaug," which means "Berry Land," and correctly describes much of the land which had suffered from fires. The name of Wilbraham came either from an English baronet of that name or from the parish of Wilbra-

ham, situated near Cambridge in England. The first town meeting was held August 25, 1763, and the only business transacted was to choose a moderator and a clerk, for the clerk had to go to Springfield the next morning to be sworn. Then the town meeting continued in the afternoon and the usual officers were elected. The "Dear Reaves" were to see that deer were not hunted at unsuitable seasons of the year, and tithing men were chosen to see that the Sunday laws were obeyed, and especially that frisky boys and girls in the galleries were restrained. The latter was a task requiring ceaseless vigilance.

Schools were early an important topic in the town meetings and in 1775 the old school districts were re-arranged and ten in all were formed. One hundred and twenty-six dollars was apportioned for the maintenance, which meant only twelve dollars and sixty cents for each school. At this time there were only two schoolhouses in the town. The sessions in the other districts were held at some farmhouse and perhaps taught by the farmer. Some of the "school lots" which were assigned for the support of schools in an early allotment of land were sold and that money added to what the town voted. No slates were used here until after this period, but ink and paper, coal and board, nail and birch bark, and sometimes the earth or ashes were the medium for figuring.

Roads, too, began to receive more attention, but the towns did not hold themselves liable for accidents on account of defective highways until after the Revolution. The first road "Established" was from "Third Brook so called" through the southeast part of the town to Wales. The roads varied from one to three rods in width and care was taken to have them run on dividing lines or cross a lot at right angles. From the Bay Road on the north end of the town, crossing from east to west, ran four paths, more or less used for foot travelers, bridle paths, or for wheels; the West Road, Middle or Ridge Road, the East Road, and another on the west side of the "outward commons." Five trails crossed these, rather regularly spaced, running east and west. Less than \$85 a year was raised for roads in the first ten years, a sum which would hardly clear the paths of big stones and cut away the bushes. However, this was fairly adequate, for up to 1782 there were but two two-horse wagons and five two-horse sleighs in the north part of the town.

In the church, affairs did not always go smoothly. The south part of the town was growing and did not care much about repairing the meetinghouse or building new pews, though a few persons built pews for themselves. The singers in the church were weary of Deacon Warriner, who had "lined out" the hymns for over twenty years. Singingmasters had made their way into town, bringing new tunes with them, and "Old Hundred" seemed likely to be replaced by more modern music. The final result of town meetings and many votes was the report of a committee of ten men giving the names of twenty-three tunes which were to be sung, and no others without "consent." The honors of leading were divided and the deacon could lead in the forenoon and one of the young men in the afternoon. Singers were to be allowed to stand or sit as they chose, and a leader had "liberty to use the motion of his hand while singing." These regulations were to be tried out for three months and the recommendation was made that "beating with hand" be left to the schools. Finally, this solid committee states "we cannot but recommend to ourselves and others to study the Things which make for peace, and the things whereby we may Edify one another"; and harmony between the old "liners" on the floor and the young singing school pupils in the gallery seems at hand. It was not of long duration, however, for the deacons soon had an article in the town warrant "to make Inquiry into the conduct of those who called themselves the singers in this town." How the matter was finally settled the records do not show, but on the last vote recorded the gallery seemed ahead of the deacons.

Mr. Mirick's health failed in 1772 and difficulties arose over supplying the pulpit and paying his salary. He had thriftily run his farm during his pastorate and at one time had two negroes for work in the fields and one in the house. He offered to relinquish a portion of his salary to pay for preaching services, but a part of the parish wished to dismiss him entirely. He was given a good chance to resign, but he did not choose to do so, and when visited by a committee of five sent by the town to see what his demands were on them, he replied: "What the town owes me." He died December 22, 1776, after a ministry of thirty-five years and six months.

From the death of Mr. Mirick there was no settled minister in the north part of the town for eleven years. In the meantime a Baptist group had organized and the southern part of the town had so grown



that it was made a separate parish in 1782. A committee from out of town chosen to consider this matter stated they considered it "a great unhappiness that a town so Respectable as the Town of Wilbraham is, Should in the management of their Publick affairs, suffer such animosities to arise among them."

Near the close of this period Deacon Warriner died, and as he had no children, left his "Lawful money" to the town, one-half for the support of the gospel and the other half to the school, provided those "of a Different Constitution from the Standing order of Churches in this land shall forever be excluded from receiving any Benefit from the same."

The Revolutionary War period brought to Wilbraham the same hardships that it brought to other towns in the county. Large bounties had to be raised to send men into the field, clothing and food had to be furnished the soldiers, crops were harvested by women and children, and a depreciated currency struggled with. "Very full" town meetings were held and patriotism ran high. When word came by rider from Boston of the battle of Lexington, thirty-four men responded to the call with such speed that they were on the great Bay Road, hastening east, before nightfall. By the time the war ended about three hundred Wilbraham men had served their time and twenty had given their lives for the cause, four of whom were killed in battle and sixteen died from disease. The rest came back to neglected farms and financial troubles, and the courts were full of property suits. There was no peace, though peace had been proclaimed. The blessings of liberty and prosperity were still beyond reach, and various leaders broke forth with remedies. Among these was Daniel Shays, of Pelham, who with Luke Day, of West Springfield, planned to capture the Springfield Arsenal. Shays reached Wilbraham with his ragged force of armed farmers on the twenty-fourth of January, 1787, and spent the night there, with his soldiers quartered on the inhabitants. The next morning he marched on to the arsenal, but Asaph King mounted his young saddle horse and started across the fields to warn General Shepard. The snow was knee deep and covered with a sharp crust which would not bear the horse, so that when King at last came out on the road far in advance of Shays, his horse's legs were cut and bleeding. Nevertheless, he reached the arsenal in forty-five minutes from the time he left Wilbraham and



General Shepard was ready for the insurgents when they arrived. Apparently no Wilbraham men joined Shays' army, but John Langdon, the hero of two wars and then over sixty years of age, who was in Shepard's army, used to take keen delight in telling how he with his old "Queen's Arm" at his eye, frightened a whole squad of Shays' men.

Methodist preachers began their work in the town in 1791 and two years later raised and covered their first meetinghouse, though it was not finished until many years later. Camp meetings, which began in 1814, were a great stimulus to the sect in the summer time, and a stove warmed both bodies and hearts in the winter. This was a great innovation for the times and not for a number of years afterward did any other church in the town follow this example. Camp meetings were held in the place by several societies on different weeks for many years. The Adventists were there for a time and also a negro society. Later the present camp meeting site at Laurel Park, above Northampton, was bought for the Springfield District of the Methodist Conference. The Universalists came into the South Parish in 1826, but never built a church, instead using the different schoolhouses for their services during the few years they were in existence. Then came the "Millerites," who awakened great interest and not a little terror by their prophecy that the world would be burned up in April, 1843. Fortunately, the consuming fire did not descend, nor the watching saints ascend, and interest faded. Dr. Abial Bottom told of an experience of his about this time. As he was driving along early one evening, his horse was frightened at something up in a tree close at hand. The doctor saw a shape resembling a human figure among the branches and asked: "What are you doing up there at this time of night?" A woman's voice answered: "I have on my ascension robe and am waiting to be wafted to the realms of light beyond the skies."

Much trouble was experienced in the orthodox society over the payment of church taxes. Sometimes the Methodists and Baptists were exempt, but when they were not, they might rebel at "Taxation without representation" and obstinately insist on voting in the parish meeting, sometimes outvoting the orthodox members.

Eleven years passed in the North Parish between the death of the Reverend Noah Mirick and the next settled minister. In the meantime the struggle began to have the meetinghouse located in a

more central and easily accessible spot and vote after vote was taken for some years on the subject, until finally the "tabernacle of the Lord" was moved down from Wigwam Hill onto the street. At one time when Mr. Calvin Colton was desired as a preacher, the church drew up a paper to present to him, expressing their desire that their pastor should confine his teaching on controversial points to the language of inspiration, or not speak on them at all. Whether the graces expected of Mr. Colton were not attractive to him, or their acquisition impossible, does not appear, but Mr. Colton declined and Ebenezer Brown was called. The Methodists and Baptists now had a rest for a time, for inward struggles rent the parish and members left, not to return until Mr. Brown was dismissed and peace again visited Zion. The old meetinghouse and parsonage were superseded by new structures and were used as barns. The new church served for only twenty years before it was destroyed by fire on the afternoon of Sunday, June 24, 1877. A small boy wandered into the building, filled the stove full of papers and lighted them. The stovepipe had been disconnected from the chimney and soon the building was ablaze. Four dwelling houses were burned at the same time.

The South Parish built their church in 1783, after holding meetings under the oak trees in summer and in the houses in winter. The building was placed in the street at first, much to the detriment of appearances, but it was finally moved and remodeled on a suitable site. The minister was to have twenty-four cords of wood yearly and the job was struck off to the lowest bidders in lots of from four to six cords. Possibly the bidders never brought their poorest wood or crookedest sticks to the minister, but in 1816 he was no doubt relieved to be paid in cash instead. In the summer of 1822 a famous revivalist provided a great awakening in the town and ninety-three were added to the church. Mr. Warren was minister at this time and during the forty-one years of his ministry he baptized four hundred and seventy people.

Sunday schools were opened in the town about 1824. The pupils mostly committed verses and hymns to memory and very little instruction was given. At a later period question books were introduced. The Sunday school was preceded by a period when the "Assembly's Catechism" was learned in the public schools and the minister would go once a month, on Saturdays, to hear the children recite it. Some-

times the children went to the minister's house and recited to him there, and these were great occasions to the little folks. It is not to be supposed that they understood the awful mysteries unfolded in the words which they repeated. They did understand, however, that they were reciting what was sacred, and reverent feelings arose under the influence of unmeaning sounds.

The practice of "keeping" Saturday evenings was followed in many families. If traps or snares had been set in the woods, they must all be sprung before the sun went down on Saturday and not reset until after sun down on Sunday. The small children sometimes stood at the west windows in the latter part of the Sabbath Day, watching, wishing and waiting for the moment when they could run and play.

The public schools were not forgotten. Though the people were embarrassed with debt and burdened with taxes, they realized that knowledge was a corner stone of the Republic. A grammar school was voted twelve pounds in 1792, provided that any pupils in the town could attend, but the scholars of parents who did not furnish one quarter of a cord of wood cut fit for fire by the first of January could not be taught. Some days the wood was scarce and at other times it would defy the power of fire. Green pine did not make good kindling; white birch did, but went out when least expected. The teachers "boarded round," remaining at each house where there were scholars from three to twelve days. It was a great occasion, for the children especially, to have the schoolmaster come to their house to board. If not the fatted calf, the fatted pig was killed, and the last trembling chicken was sacrificed to honor the guest. With what mingled fear and delight would the little girl invite the teacher to come and how delightedly she announced his acceptance to her envious companions. Then the candlesticks and andirons were polished, the best bed put in order, the knives well scoured and the whole premises brushed up. There was rye and Indian bread, luscious spare ribs, cider apple sauce and homemade cheese; the best the home could provide.

The amount of money appropriated for school use often seems very meager, but it would compare well with what is given today. Money was hard to get. Labor the farmer could furnish and he could work on the roads, but not in the school room. A geography with an atlas was introduced as early as 1820, but it was later than that



before boys were bold enough to study it, or girls courageous enough to study arithmetic.

Nine Mile Pond was the scene of a tragedy in April, 1799, when five of the young people of Wilbraham and a young man from Connecticut were drowned there by the overturning of a boat in which they were sailing. The story was published in Springfield the same year in a small volume with the funeral sermons. The young people were part of a group of "merry-makers" gathered in the Bliss home. Those who reached the pond first started out in a small sailboat and the others were witnesses of the disaster. The wind was high and flawy and as the boat was rounding a point it caught the gale and sank. There was no other boat near and no help at hand. Three of the bodies were taken from the water about two hours later and two were found the next morning, but the sixth could not be located. Surrounding towns sent help to assist in the search and a heavy cannon was drawn from Springfield with the hope that the concussion caused by firing it might bring the body to the surface. A ditch was cut through the open fields to drain off the water and the pond was considerably lowered, but to no avail. On the morning of the sixteenth day after the drowning two travelers passing by saw the body floating in the center of the pond and the long search was ended.

For some years after the settlement of the town it was necessary to draw all lumber from the sawmill at Sixteen Acres, but Lewis Langdon erected one on the Scantic in 1750 and from then on there has been a constant succession of mills of one sort or another so that finally there were seven sawmills, five gristmills and one shingle-mill. The first carding machine was placed in a building on Twelve Mile Brook in 1803 and fulling mills soon followed, as well as a plant for dyeing and dressing cloth. Walter Burt invented a pair of shears for cutting the nap of cloth, but they worked imperfectly and were superseded by others. Roper had a clover mill for cleansing clover seed, which was famous in its day, and he also manufactured chairs. The amount of wood consumed by the early inhabitants produced a surplus of ashes and two men started the manufacture of potash. Four tanneries in different sections of the town took care of the hides and turned them into leather. Orchards were numerous on the hills and so were cider mills and distilleries. A farmer often made three hundred barrels of cider in a season and sometimes drank thirty and



a barrel of brandy to give it tone. Deacon Sumner Sessions erected the first woolen mill in Wilbraham, which in 1863 was turning out every day one thousand yards of three-fourth satinet. Three other mills in similar operation at that time turned out all together 600,000 yards a year.

There was no post-office until 1821 and Mathew Gardner brought the first mail to the town in a one-horse wagon; and another man with the papers went riding through the streets once a week blowing his horn.

The tailoring was done at home by women who went from house to house, fitting garments. The old horse was roused at an unaccustomed hour on a cold morning, and while the stars were yet bright was started off after the "tailors," who were in turn hurried back that they might do a good day's work and earn their money. The children got out the button-box, selected the buttons and then made the dull metal glow and sparkle by a vigorous application to the soles of their shoes.

Flax was raised, broken and swingled by the men, and all through the winter day and long winter evenings the whole house was made musical by the hum of the wheels as the mothers spun the flax and the girls the tow. When spring came and the sounding loom and flying shuttle had done their work, there might be seen on the clean grass long pieces of cloth bleaching to a snowy whiteness.

The braiding of straw and palm-leaf succeeded spinning and weaving and sometimes the whole family, boys as well as girls, spent the evenings making straw hats and bonnets and palm-leaf hats.

Thousands of yards of straw braid were sold from the town. The nicely sanded floor gave way to carpets early in 1800. Crockery was rare at first and wood and pewter were used. Few wore shoes in summer and a pair of boots was a wonder.

Wilbraham before the Revolution had nearly as many inhabitants as Springfield and its fertile lands produced more heavily the rye and corn which brought good money at the distilleries there until the temperance reform swept the country. That market was then closed, but the railroad soon stimulated manufacture and Wilbraham's products found sale among the mother city's increased population. Through all its history the town has had few rich men and few poor. It has produced no one great man, but many fine citizens.

When the "Great Western Railroad" (now the Boston and Albany) was built in 1839, a station was established in Wilbraham. Elisha Fuller's tavern stood a few rods to the north and both were moved in 1851 on a Sunday by the railroad on four platform cars, two on each track, and the tavern was set on its new foundation without even disturbing a glass of water, full to the brim, standing on a shelf in the dining room. On December 24, 1841, trains began running between Boston and Albany, on the longest continuous line of railway then in operation in the United States.

About 1855 the Wilbraham Aqueduct Company was formed for the purpose of supplying the village with water and a reservoir was made about half way up the mountain. An aqueduct of pine logs was laid to the Main Street and the boring was done with a long auger run by steam, in a lot near the academy. The logs were required to be eight inches in diameter at the small end and a four-inch hole was bored, leaving at best only two inches of sappy green wood around the hole. When the water was turned on the logs began to burst and the system was a great expense for repairs. Later it was all bought by Wilbraham Academy and an iron pipe pushed through the hole in the old logs part of the way.

After the removal of the Baptist Church at Colton Hollow to South Wilbraham, in 1854, there was no stated place for religious services in that portion of the town, but services were held quite regularly in private houses and the schoolhouse. It is said that a colored man who had been a slave preached there for a time. A Methodist class was later formed and led by Lorenzo Kibbe, who was a large, portly man fond of singing and with a voice like a trumpet. He lived on Main Street and walked to and from the meetings. As he descended the mountains on his homeward journey in the evening he would break into song and his voice could be heard on Main Street.

There were persistent stories in some New England towns about "Captain Kidd's gold" which had been buried here and there. Some Wilbraham men dug for several nights in and around an old cellar hole on top of the mountain. They dug in silence for the superstition was that if a word were spoken the buried treasure would disappear even deeper into the earth. A boy of ten learned of the plans of the men and followed them at a safe distance one night and later related the story.

The raising of tobacco was considerable of an industry from about 1850 until the decline in this region in favor of a light tobacco grown elsewhere. The farmers brought their milk to a cheese factory for a few years and later the milk went to the Springfield markets. The business of raising sheep and the production of wool came and went. The newest industry is the raising of peaches, and thousands of trees have been set out so that "Wilbraham peaches" are known far and wide. Many rocky pastures and neglected fields have become beauty spots and produce a substantial revenue. 1911 was the peak year for peaches and over 40,000 baskets were sold.

Mt. Marcy, named for Dr. Oliver Marcy, a famous geologist, now has an airplane beacon. In 1908 the first chestnut blight noticed in Massachusetts was discovered in Wilbraham on the Glendale Road. By 1913 not an unaffected tree was to be found and soon all chestnut timber disappeared. Besides the "Mile Tree" on the green there is the "Merrick Elm" near Woodland Dell Cemetery, "Mile Oak" between the two villages, "Rindge Oak" and "Baldwin" maple, perhaps one of the finest of its kind in this section.

Dr. Stebbins Foskit and Wesleyan Academy built a private telephone line about 1880 and four years later Dr. H. G. Webber joined the line. The charge at first was \$30 per year, raised in 1886 to \$100 per year. The public line was built in 1903 and now has about three hundred subscribers.

The Grange Hall was built in 1900 as a memorial to Dr. Foskit by his widow. The library building was dedicated in June, 1913, as part of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebration, a gift of Henry Cutler. Receipts dated as far back as 1781 are held by descendants of persons who had purchased shares in the "Library Company."

In 1872 the Collins Manufacturing Company at North Wilbraham was incorporated as the Collins Paper Company. The plant now forms a part of the Whitney system of papermaking and has been the largest factor in the growth and development of the northern part of the town.

The grain and milling business now conducted at North Wilbraham was established at Ashland in 1844 by Henry Cutler. It was one of the first concerns in New England to grind western corn.



With the building of the Western Railroad in 1839 came the earliest Irish residents. The first houses erected by the Ludlow Associates in the 'eighties in the western part of the town were peopled mainly by Scotch and French Canadians. Shortly after 1900 the same association began building near the Stony Hill Road and here the first Polish people made their homes. About 1917 building began in the Plain section. It is now estimated that about one-third of the town's population is of Polish extraction.

Fifty-eight men from Wilbraham served in the World War and three gave their lives to the same.

In 1912 the Wilbraham State Game Farm was started and the money from fishing and hunting licenses helps to keep it going. At first wild turkeys, ducks, quails, pheasants and ruffed grouse were raised with the sitting hen, but since 1916 incubators and brooders have been used with encouraging results, and in 1935 the product was 8,200 birds. The farm covers one hundred and sixty acres and has a superintendent's house and a large farm barn as well as pens and houses for the birds.

New England has been the source of much theoretical and practical wisdom utilized in other parts of America. Here was the cradle of liberty. Here was invented the town. Here originated the system of popular education. Here, too, were established the academy and the college as complementary of the popular system. For a long time New England stood alone in her enthusiasm for education. The Royal Governor of Virginia congratulated himself and his people that the Colony was without a common school or a printing press. The educational temper and methods of New England have done much to elevate her people and to make her influential in the affairs and councils of the Nation.

The Methodists came late to New England and their evangelistic work at first took all of their attention, but soon the question of advanced education was raised. Children of Methodist families were obliged to enter institutions controlled by the orthodox church and this was objectionable in various ways. The antagonism between the groups was such as we now find it hard to realize.

In 1815 the preachers at the New England Conference proposed to proceed at once with the formation of an advanced school of their own. They were meeting at Newmarket, New Hampshire, which



seemed to them an ideal place to locate. Some subscriptions were secured in the town, but the preachers themselves gave a large part of the \$755 secured for a start. A two-story wooden building with a bell tower was erected. The lower story contained a single room with desks and seats, and the upper floor was divided into two rooms, one reserved for storage. The building was completed in midsummer and the school opened on September 1, 1817, with ten students, five of each sex, an innovation in educational circles. The Methodists broke with the past and elevated woman to an equal place with man.



WILBRAHAM ACADEMY

Moses White, the first principal was extremely careful of the moral and religious instruction of the pupils. Intemperance was prevalent and he set his face against the evil. In the absence of a boarding-house, students were taken into families at one dollar and twenty-five cents per week, an arrangement agreeable to both citizens and students.

The trustees adopted sixteen brief but excellent rules for governing the students, such as forbidding scuffling and wrestling; attendance on public worship; to avoid going into the water on any day but Saturday; against the purchase of spirituous liquors; and no absence from lodgings after nine o'clock.

Reverend Martin Ruter was elected the next principal and threw himself into the work. He was a clear, forceful and eloquent preacher and never failed to draw crowds. Under his inspiration a branch academy was established at Kingston, about ten miles away, but it was not a success.

The religious condition of the academy during Ruter's stay was very encouraging, and many were converted. Theatrical exhibitions were discouraged and tragedies and comedies alike were under the ban. Regulation of the sexes was a problem and courtships were forbidden while attending the school.

The tide of prosperity at the Newmarket Academy took a turn after Dr. Ruter left and Wilbur Fisk, a young graduate of Brown University, was asked for aid in raising funds. He declined to do so unless the academy was moved from its unfavorable location and finally the Newmarket property was sold. Applications for the relocation of the academy came from Rochester, New Hampshire; Lynn, Massachusetts; Ellington, Connecticut; and finally, from Wilbraham. News that the board of trustees was to meet in Boston on Wednesday reached Wilbraham the Friday previous. Definite proposals would have to be made if Wilbraham wanted to get the institution, and Calvin Brewer and the Reverend Phineas Peck, temporary preacher, made a quick canvass for funds and a substantial sum was promised. But the result must get to the trustees in Boston, so early Monday morning Mr. Peck hitched his fine driving horse to Mr. Brewer's light sulky and reached Boston, a distance of ninety miles, at noon the next day. To his surprise the board was already in session and he presented his case and it was received with favor. There was great joy in Wilbraham when the news came to them and the pledges of money were raised to \$2,693, a generous amount for the times. Later, John Lindsay scoured New England for more subscriptions and sums from one dollar up were gathered in.

Many sites were offered for the new institution and finally three acres were bought on the east side of the road and a two-story brick building started which was to have one large and two small rooms

below and one large hall and four "drawing-rooms" above. The building was completed without a cupola, though ordered in the plan. It was simply forgotten by the builders and was not added until the following spring, the old Newmarket bell in the meantime being supported on a cross-beam set in two crotched posts and rung by means of a string. Two sets of high steps led up to the first story, the "gentlemen" using the south ones and the "ladies" the north.

Though Mr. Fisk had been selected as principal he did not come to Wilbraham at once and Mr. Dunn, a teacher and graduate of Bowdoin, served in his place. The school opened in November for a short term, with seven students, all residents of the town, but during the year one hundred and four students were in attendance. They came exclusively from Methodist families and for the serious purpose of study. Those who lived in town boarded at home and the others found lodgings about the town. To an unusual extent the people of the village participated in the joyous life of the institution. When Mr. Fisk came he allowed large liberty to the pupils and in order to accustom them to society held gatherings on Wednesday evenings where teachers and trustees with their families mingled with the students.

For the punishment of obstinate students, a penitentiary and a dungeon, located in the basement, were provided. The former was a small enclosure with a gleam of light and a seat for culprits who might be cast into this dismal place. The latter, for the more incorrigible, was about eight feet square and without seat or light. The culprit received his food through a small slide, and one trial of this punishment was quite sufficient.

The principal was usually equal to whatever he undertook, but in one instance a student was too much for him. The lad had offended and was ordered to prepare for a flogging the next morning in the presence of the school. After the reading of the Bible and a speech on the necessity of maintaining order at any cost, Mr. Fisk took his well prepared birch and while the "ladies" shed tears or hid their faces, brought it down on the back of the offender. The blow seemed to have little effect and as the principal continued a hollow sound made him suspicious. The boy was ordered to shed his coat and then vest after vest until finally a large Atlas shaped book was revealed and fell on the floor amid roars of laughter from the school. The master then discovered several pairs of pants thrust into large bor-



rowed boots and realizing how ridiculous was the situation he joined in the merriment. The culprit had indeed "prepared" for the flogging as he had been told. Afterward he became a minister.

Students flocked to the school, even from distant places. A resident of Berkshire offered to take a load of students from his own town to Wilbraham and had eight passengers with their innumerable boxes and bundles. A boarding hall now seemed necessary to care for the many pupils and after numerous plans for building were made the village hotel was bought in 1825 and an addition was added. This rid the vicinity of a place where drinks were served and where frequent convivial parties were held. On one occasion it was said the revellers had ridden their horses in at the large front door, through the hall, and out the back way.

The east room in the second story of the academy came to be used as a dormitory for the small boys under the charge of a proctor, who often found it no easy matter to keep them in order and take them in to prayers before daylight. The first to occupy this position was Selah Stocking. Often on rising his slippers, stockings and even his pants would be missing. On one occasion as he sprang from his couch to strike a light he was hurled full length on the floor with one foot fast in the bed, which prevented him from extricating himself. One lad finally assisted him and it was found that strong cord ran about the room fastened to the great toe of each sleeper.

The second proctor was Joseph J. Brooks, a good scholar and a favorite with the faculty, but the boys made his life as difficult as possible. One night a Spanish fly was attached to his leg, leaving a blister in the morning.

One of the local trustees was Hon. Abel Bliss, and he was strongly in favor of total abstinence at a time when, in most families, liquor was on the sideboard and furnished to guests. As a trustee of the academy he exerted his utmost influence to banish temptation from the vicinity.

A devoted teacher, Isaac Goodnow, as a student walked sixty miles with two other young men to reach the school, where he remained for over twenty years.

The year 1856 brought a new trouble to the school when fire broke out in a second-story room of the boarding house which held over a hundred students. The rooms were heated with small wood stoves and one student had stored his supply of fuel close back of the stove



and then had gone off leaving dampers wide open. The wood caught fire and soon flames went through the roof. There was no adequate fire apparatus in Wilbraham and the engine from Springfield arrived too late to be of use. Bedding and furniture were thrown out of the windows and one man after casting several washbowls and pitchers out took a box-stove in his arms and carefully carried it to the roadside. One of the professors who had lectured to his class on self-control and calmness, left fifteen hundred dollars' worth of valuables to burn in his room, while he ran up and down the street flourishing all he saved—a pair of red top boots.

Property to the value of \$12,000 was soon a mass of glowing embers, but the courage of the principal was unshaken and he made immediate plans to draw in more funds in order to build. Somewhat over a year later a fifty thousand dollar structure was completed for the flourishing school.

In the flush days just after the Civil War attendance at Wilbraham Academy reached a new high mark, but by 1867 a slow decline had started. The semi-centennial celebration of the founding at Newmarket came the year following. Russell Conwell, an alumnus of the institution, delivered the oration when a similar celebration of the removal to Wilbraham took place. Many trustees and principals struggled with the debt which hung over the academy for years, but it was finally wiped out in 1887 and then began the work of building up an endowment fund. Attendance again increased and Wesleyan Academy at Wilbraham continued its important work until 1911, when it was closed as a co-educational school.

The next year it was opened to boys alone, under the name of Wilbraham Academy, and at the present time the thirteen or fourteen large buildings house one hundred and fifteen students and the usual corps of teachers and employees. The alumni have recently given to the school a cabin on Wilbraham Mountain and the Corbin Field House for the promotion of athletics. A wooden track for outdoor winter sports will probably be the next gift of the alumni. Emphasis in athletics is placed on general development of students rather than on winning teams. An increasingly useful program of vocational guidance is being developed and hobby groups are encouraged. The social life is rounded out with clubs and dances, and an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect prevails, such as is suited to this old religious institution.



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# *Index*

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# INDEX

By Edwin W. Wheat

- Abbott, Jacob, 374.  
Abolition, see Slavery.  
Abrams, Abram, 482.  
Acadia, "New France," 393.  
Account book of Stephen Cross, 936-940.  
Adams, Charles, 757.  
Adams, J. W., and Company, 757.  
Adams, John, 262, 339.  
Adams, John B., 352.  
Adams, John Quincy, 333, 338, 565.  
Adams, Mr., 736.  
Adams, Samuel, 929.  
Adams, Walter, 757.  
Africa, 134, 277, 549.  
Agassiz, Louis, 419.  
Agawam, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 10, 24, 25, 31, 55, 63, 146, 329, 481, 536, 590, 598, 601, 606, 612, 613, 669, 999, 1001, 1012.  
Agawam bank, 510.  
Agawam Canal Company, 923, 1011.  
Agawam Center, Agawam, 778, 783.  
Agawam Indians, 25, 31, 125, 137, 138, 146, 706, 883.  
Agawam Meadow, 1011.  
Agawam, the mother of Springfield plantation, 777-784.  
Agawam Paper Company, 970.  
Agawam plantation, 35-51.  
Agawam, population, 781.  
"Agawam pork," 265.  
Agawam River, 24-27, 65, 105, 198, 279, 329, 604, 777, 780-782.  
Agawam Woolen Company, 783.  
Agricultural machinery, 638, 815, 868, 919, 921, 960, 993.  
Agriculture, see Cattle; Cheese manufacture; Fences; Flax; Grains; Hemp; Horses; Husking; Milk marketing; Mills, grain; Peat bogs; Poultry; Sheep; Sugar making; Swine; Tobacco; Turkeys; Vegetables.  
Ahlquist, L. P., 500.  
Ahmed, Redjeb, 504.  
Air races, 598, 599.  
Aircraft factory, 598.  
Airports, 598, 754, 755, 782, 1041.  
Alabama, 858.  
Albano, John, 478.  
Albany, N. Y., 97, 158, 164-166, 170, 250, 252, 286, 326, 352, 446, 508, 509, 739, 744, 787, 816, 834, 1040.  
Albrecht, Paul, 559.  
Alcott, Amos Bronson, 582.  
Alden (Reed) house, 765.  
Aldenville, Chicopee, 657-659.  
Alder Brook, 536.  
Alexis, Grand Duke, 495.  
Allegheny River, 352.  
Allen, Chauncey, 756.  
Allen, Edmund, 313.  
Allen, Frank G., 771.  
Allen Guest House, 904.  
Allen, Pilot, 287, 288.  
Allen, "Soapy," 407.  
Allen, Thomas W., 352.  
Allen, W. D., Mrs., 945.  
Allentown, Pa, 924.  
Alline, John, 36.  
Allyn, David, 943.  
Allyn family, 701.  
Allyn, H. D., 711.  
Allyn, Lewis B., 754.  
Alpert, Louis, 482.  
Alsace-Lorraine, 559.  
Alton, Ill., 511.  
Alum Pond, 803, 805.  
Alvord, Elijah, 231.  
Alvord, Noah, 1024.  
"Ambulance chasers," 438.  
American Bosch Corporation, 525.  
American Cycle Company, 753.  
American International College, 468, 557.  
American News Company, Inc., 320.  
American Pad Company, 711.  
American Whip Company, 750.  
American Writing Paper Company, 708-710, 718, 723.  
Ames, D. and J., 388.  
Ames, David, 266, 313, 314, 319, 388.  
Ames, Fisher, 263, 264.  
Ames, Galen, 314.  
Ames, James T., 314, 315.  
Ames, John, 314, 388.  
Ames Manufacturing Company, 315, 361, 362, 635, 656, 659, 660.  
Ames, Nathan P., 315, 344, 635.  
Ames Paper Mill, 314.  
Ames, William, 315, 344.  
Amherst, Jeffrey, 739, 1006.  
Amherst, Hampshire Co., Mass., 220.  
Amherst College, 10, 325, 327, 413, 560, 769, 770, 985.  
Amostown, in West Springfield, 1007, 1009.  
Anderson, Engineer, 345.  
Anderson, Luther, 502.  
Andersonville, Ga., 686.  
Andover, Essex Co., Mass., 924.

- André, John, 331.  
 Andros, Edmund, 170, 844, 1023.  
 Angers, Pierre, 458.  
 Animals, see Bears; Beavers; Cattle; Crows; Deer; Fauna; Foxes; Horses; Lions; Muskrats; Panthers; Pigeons; Poultry; Raccoons; Sheep; Skunks; Snakes; Swine; Turkeys; Whale; Wildcats; Wolves; Woodchucks.  
 Animals, prehistoric, 11, 704, 799, 985.  
 Annibal, John, 918.  
 Anniversary, 300th, see Tercentenary of Springfield.  
 "Appleseed, Johnny," see Chapman, Jonathan.  
 Appleton, Captain, 147, 149, 163.  
 Appleton Street School, 692.  
 Arabia, and Arabs, 502.  
 Architects, see Builders and architects.  
 Arkansas, 475.  
 Armenia and Armenians, 451-453.  
 Armistice of Nov. 11, 1918, 596.  
 Armory, United States, 225, 259, 271, 276, 278, 283, 285, 287, 296, 313, 319, 321, 334, 335, 343, 347, 374, 386, 387, 390, 404, 420, 426, 461, 473, 477, 481, 499, 507, 508, 543, 577, 591, 595, 597, 606, 754, 847, 931, 1012, 1014.  
 Arms and ammunition manufacture, 283, 313, 315, 321, 361, 495, 499, 511, 563, 591, 632, 635, 656, 891, 907, 920, 944, 978.  
 Also see Armory, U. S.; Arsenal, U. S.  
 Armstrong, Missionary, 341.  
 Army, United States, see War.  
 Arnold, Benedict, 331.  
 Aronson, M. J., 484.  
 Arsenal, United States, 218, 224, 299, 300, 303, 347, 386, 508, 568, 578, 746, 956, 1007, 1034.  
 Artists and art collections, 332, 565-567, 584-586, 590, 755, 870, 945.  
 Ashfield, Franklin Co., Mass., 249.  
 Ashland, Middlesex Co., Mass., 1041.  
 Ashland, Ohio, 356.  
 Ashley, Elisha, 669.  
 Ashley, John, 1003.  
 Ashley, Joseph, 206.  
 Ashley, Moses, 1011.  
 Ashley, Noah, 741.  
 Ashley Ponds, 668, 692.  
 Ashley, Robert, 84, 90.  
 Ashleyville, in West Springfield, 1009.  
 Ashmun, George, 311-313, 970.  
 Ashmun, Justus, 791.  
 Asia, 660.  
 Asia Minor, 451, 464, 585.  
 Assessments, see Taxes.  
 Associated Press, the, 320, 610.  
 Association of Wool Growers, 358.  
 Athletics, 409, 501, 512, 557, 561, 598, 702, 705, 716, 924, 1047; also see Gymnasiums; Societies, clubs, and organizations; Sports.  
 Atkins, Zenas, 749.  
 Atkinson Tavern, 1019.  
 "Atlantis," Greek newspaper, 467.  
 Attorneys, see Lawyers.  
 Atwater, Frank, 761.  
 Atwater, Noah, 745, 746, 858.  
 Atwell, George, 844, 845.  
 Auctions, or vendues, 222, 632, 820, 825, 930, 953, 990.  
 Aumer, Joseph, 389.  
 Austin Brook, 839.  
 Australia, 329, 559.  
 Austria, 492, 1010.  
 Authors, Springfield, 92, 581, 582.  
 Automobile manufacture and sale, 523-526, 598, 660, 662, 936, 1016; also see Rubber manufacture.  
 Avery, Ephraim, 943.  
 Avery, Mayor, 713.  
 Avery, Nathan P., 695, xv.  
 Ayres, Sergeant, 164.  
 Baab, Otto, 463.  
 Babcock, Horace H., 352.  
 Bach, Frederick, 694.  
 Bachelor's Brook, 233.  
 Back, Harding Gates, 875.  
 Back, Judah, 875.  
 Bacon, Bishop, 472.  
 Bacon family, 341, 902.  
 Bacon, George A., 899.  
 "Baconsfield," house, 899.  
 Bacopoulos, George, 467.  
 Bad-luck Mountain, 856.  
 Bagg, Aaron C., 694.  
 Bagg, Ernest Newton, 552, 583.  
 Bagg, John, 1003.  
 Bailey, John, 961.  
 Bailey, Winthrop, 296.  
 Baird, James, 789.  
 Baird, John, 794.  
 Baird Tavern, 797.  
 Baker, A. G., xv.  
 Baker, Thomas, 197.  
 Bakeries, 154, 160, 297, 484, 534.  
 Bald Mountain, 856, 869.  
 Baldwin family, 853.  
 Ball, Benjamin, 667.  
 Ball, George, 283.  
 Ball, Lebbeus, 855.  
 Ball, Samuel, 107, 167.  
 "Ballad of Springfield Mountain," 1029-1031.  
 Ballantine, John, 742, 743, 794, 944.  
 Ballantine, William Gay, 560, xv.  
 Ballard, Sherebiah, 874.  
 Balliet, Thomas M., 559.  
 Bancroft, George, 316, 581.  
 Bancroft, John, 743.  
 Bancroft, Jonathan, 853.

- Lancroft, Samuel, 853.  
 Bangor, Maine, 944.  
 Banks, see Financial affairs.  
 Banks, Nathaniel Prentiss, 421.  
 Bannon, James, 474.  
 Bannon, Robert Emmet, 474.  
 Baptist Road, 844.  
 "Baptist Settlement," 844.  
 "Baptist Village," 668, 669, 684, 685.  
 Barbados, 20, 113, 179.  
 Barber, David, 317-319.  
 Barber family, 967.  
 Barber, John Warner, 386.  
 Barbour, J. B., Sons, 924.  
 Bardelli, Joseph, 477, 481.  
 Barker, Ezra, 1029.  
 Barker, J. F., 543, 1012, 1014-1016.  
 Barley, 1026.  
 Barnard, Henry, 932.  
 Barnes' Airport, 755.  
 Barnes, Mr., 282, 386, 517.  
 Earnes, Stephen G., 901.  
 Barnes, Vincent E., 754.  
 Barney, Everett Hosmer, 477, 511-513, 540, 541.  
 Barney and Berry Company, 511, 512.  
 Barnum, Phineas Taylor, 390, 648.  
 Barrett, Daniel, 943.  
 Barrett, Robert, 727.  
 Barrett, Robert E., xv.  
 Barristers, see Lawyers.  
 Barrows, Charles, 405.  
 Barrows, Charles Henry, 581.  
 Bartholomew, Squire, 794.  
 Bartlett Brothers, 493.  
 Barton, N. P., 931.  
 Barton, Phœbe, 865.  
 Bascom, Aaron, 829.  
 Bascom, Caleb, 830.  
 Baseball, 598, 710, 715, 769, 784, 897, 920.  
 Basketball, 557.  
 Bassette, partner of Smith, 901.  
 Bates family, 853.  
 Bates' Pond, 766.  
 Bates, William G., 437.  
 Bay City, Mich., 935.  
 "Bay Path," 24, 28, 75, 76, 259, 581, 927, 949, 950.  
 Bay Path Institute, 561.  
 Bay Road, 1024, 1025, 1032, 1034.  
 Bayles, Lowell, 598, 599.  
 Beach family, 455.  
 Beach, Moses Yale, 319-321, 590.  
 Beans, 246, 247, 270, 873.  
 Bear Swamp, 910.  
 Bearg, Benjamin, 483.  
 Bears, 236, 330, 541, 742, 793, 844, 909, 915, 961, 1023, 1025.  
 Bear's Den, 1009, 1010.  
 Bearse, Richard H., 428.  
 Beautiful homes, and Longmeadow, 883-904.  
 Beaven, Thomas D., 472, 493, 563, 662.  
 Beaven-Kelly Home for Aged Men, 721.  
 Beavers and beaver trade, 22, 24, 25, 42-44, 56, 96, 97, 116, 124, 125, 132, 133, 166, 172, 197, 237, 238, 733, 793, 883, 1023.  
 Beck, Carl, 460.  
 Becket, Berkshire Co., Mass., 829.  
 Beckwith's Pond, 961.  
 Bedford Company, 983.  
 "Bedford" plantation, 853, 854.  
 Bedlam Brook, 800.  
 Bedortha, Blanche, Mrs., 80, 81, 83.  
 Bedortha, Calvin, 590, 780.  
 Bedortha, Justus, 780.  
 Bedortha, Rice, 80, 104.  
 Bedrossian, Archie, 451.  
 Bedurtha, see Bedortha.  
 Beebe family, 869.  
 Beebe, Jonah, 864.  
 Beebe, Marcus, 868.  
 Beebe and Holbrook-Wauregan Mill, 709.  
 Beech Hill, 792, 800.  
 Beecher, Clarissa, 365.  
 Beecher, Henry Ward, 765.  
 Beers, Captain, 141, 142.  
 Bees, 253, 746, 846.  
 Belcher, Benjamin, 633.  
 Belcher, Bildad B., 638.  
 Belcher, Jonathan, 791.  
 Belcher and Taylor Company, 638.  
 Belchertown, Hampshire Co., Mass., 278, 313, 581, 908, 918, 923, 1031.  
 Belden, Thomas, 780.  
 Belgium, 590.  
 Bell, Alexander Graham, 537, 538.  
 Bell, Samuel, 832, 833.  
 Bellamy, Charles, 308.  
 Bellamy, Edward, 308, 653-655.  
 Bellamy, Marion, 653.  
 Bellamy, Rufus K. (father of Edward), 653.  
 Bellows Falls, Vt., 12, 232, 279, 322, 721, 724.  
 Bells, 62, 74, 129, 168, 296, 315, 337, 343, 393, 409, 413, 416, 539, 544, 546, 548, 552, 553, 565, 568, 583, 622, 624, 632, 635, 636, 741, 759, 766, 780, 791, 794, 808, 855, 869, 885, 887, 890, 891, 922, 957, 958, 967, 968, 1008, 1045.  
 Bemis, William L., 632.  
 Bennet, James, 293.  
 Bentley, Mr., 741.  
 Benton, Colonel, 1014.  
 Benton, Daniel, 169.  
 Berkshire County, Mass., 218, 792, 796, 825, 1006, 1046.  
 Berkshire Mountains, or Hills, 9, 11, 216, 762, 943.  
 Bernhardt, Sarah, 935.  
 Berries, 254, 255, 319, 407, 696, 697, 761, 766, 767, 799, 848.



- Berry, John, 511, 512.  
 Berryland or Minnechaug (Ludlow), 907-924, 1031.  
 Bethlehem Infant Asylum, 721.  
 Beulah Land, in Blandford, 799.  
 Beverly, Essex Co., Mass., 74, 75.  
 Bicycles, 409, 526, 549, 637, 638, 656, 657, 659, 660, 662, 685, 711, 753, 900.  
 Bidwell collection, 590.  
 Bill, Gurdon, 513.  
 Bill, Nathan D., 457, 541, 542, 580.  
 Billings Hill, 843.  
 Billings, Timothy, 1003.  
 Birch Hill, 800.  
 Bisbee, John, 296.  
 Bissell, John, 109.  
 Bixby, Mr., 663.  
 Black Brook, 1009.  
 Black, Hugh, 789.  
 Black, Newton, 637.  
 "Black Patch," or "Black Shanties," 680-682.  
 Black, Robert, 795.  
 Blacksmiths, 51, 74, 283, 455, 460, 473, 619, 779, 793, 806, 815, 868, 890, 896, 1019.  
 Blair and Fiske Company, 542.  
 Blair's mill, 793.  
 Blake, Elijah, 283, 339, 341, 342.  
 Blake, Jonathan, 283.  
 Blanchard, Elizabeth, 298.  
 Blanchard, George, 298.  
 Blanchard, Showman, 298.  
 Blanchard, Thomas, 276, 279, 321, 322, 325, 960.  
 Blandford, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 247, 630, 701, 761, 787-800, 825, 826, 835, 836, 967-970, 985, 1006.  
 Blandford bicentennial, 798, 800.  
 Blandford, population, 800.  
 Blandford settled by Scotch-Irish, 787-800.  
 Blinkensop, William, 472.  
 Bliss, Abel, 908, 1031, 1046.  
 Bliss family, 884, 1038.  
 Bliss, Gad O., 899.  
 Bliss, George, 279, 281, 283, 286, 322-324, 578.  
 Bliss, Jacob, 322.  
 Bliss, James, 281.  
 Bliss, Jedediah, 261.  
 Bliss, John, 865, 866.  
 Bliss, Jonathan, 213.  
 Bliss, Judge, 261.  
 Bliss, Luke, 864.  
 Bliss, Moses, 264, 322, 910.  
 Bliss, Nathaniel, 901.  
 Bliss, Oliver, 908.  
 Bliss, Pitt, 209.  
 Bliss, Samuel, 904.  
 Bliss Tavern, 807.  
 Bliss, Teamster, 267.  
 Blizzard of 1888, 395, 711, 805.  
 Block, Adrian, 44.  
 Block Island, R. I., 31, 36.  
 Blodgett, Edward, 879.  
 Blodgett, Joseph, 873.  
 Blodgett, pioneer settler of Holland, 873-879.  
 Bloody Brook, 145.  
 Blunt Park, Springfield, 542.  
 Boats, see Ships, steamboats, etc.  
 Bodfish, David L., 963, xvi.  
 Bodurtha family, 777; also see Bedortha.  
 Bohemian books, 1010.  
 Boies family, 791.  
 Boiler manufacture, 752.  
 Boise, Enos Watson, 798.  
 Bond, Emelius, 959.  
 Bondsville, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 959.  
 Bondsville Bleaching and Dye Works, 960.  
 Book stores, 283, 294, 297, 314, 336, 338, 474, 518.  
 Boone, Daniel, 333.  
 Boone, Thomas C., 429.  
 Borden Brook Reservoir, 533, 534, 536, 537.  
 Bosch Magneto Company, 463, 525.  
 Boston, Suffolk Co., Mass., 21-25, 27, 35, 44, 46, 56, 63, 65-67, 69, 85, 92, 93, 96-98, 104, 110, 116, 128, 140, 150, 151, 159, 164, 170, 173, 178, 181, 182, 189, 196, 197, 199, 200, 202, 205, 213-215, 218, 219, 221, 229, 240, 250, 251, 254, 259, 263, 264, 266-268, 275, 276, 279, 286, 288, 292, 293, 298, 299, 316, 327, 330, 333, 336, 351, 352, 359, 391, 393, 394, 414, 418, 470, 478, 484, 510, 517, 522, 533, 535, 582, 583, 586, 588, 611, 625, 634-636, 638, 642, 651, 652, 655, 669, 673, 675, 736, 737, 739, 741, 743-745, 747, 770, 772, 779, 780, 787, 788, 790, 792, 798, 816-818, 825, 834, 837, 847, 853, 855, 896, 929, 944, 950, 952, 959-961, 967, 1000, 1104, 1006, 1019, 1020, 1034, 1040, 1044.  
 Boston Duck Company, 960.  
 Boston and Springfield Manufacturing Company, 278.  
 "Boston Tea Party," 265, 868.  
 Bosworth, Charles, 604.  
 Bottle Brook, 803.  
 Bottom, Abial, 1035.  
 Bourman, Anatole, 496.  
 Bowdoin College, 1045.  
 Bowdoin, James, 220, 745.  
 Bowen, Charles W., 428.  
 Bowen, Henry C., 428.  
 Bowles Airport, 598, 782.  
 Bowles, Henry Leland, 783.  
 Bowles, Samuel, 285, 288, 298-307, 346, 465, 514, 541, 560, 581.  
 Bowman, William, 633.  
 Boyd, William, 470.  
 Boyden, Ezekiel, 959.



- Boyer, Peter, 431.  
 Boyhood memories of a Springfield mayor (Fordis C. Parker), 401-409.  
 Boyle, John, 978.  
 Bradford, E. S., 538.  
 Bradley, Milton, 511, 513-515.  
 Bradley, Will, 586.  
 Bradway, Abel, 932.  
 Bradway, Amon, 932.  
 Bradway, Roger, 932.  
 Brainerd, Louis J., 962.  
 Brand, John W. B., 519.  
 Branding animals, 56, 114.  
 Brandywine, Del., 314.  
 Brattleboro, Vt., 279, 325.  
 Brazil, 417, 418.  
 Breakneck Hill, 803.  
 Breck (Mr.) disturbs the town, 195-209.  
 Breck, Robert, 200-206, 260, 1002.  
 Breglio, P. A., 481, 533.  
 Brennan's Dock, 870.  
 Brewer, Calvin, 1044.  
 Brewer, Charles, 264, 1028.  
 Brewer, Chauncey, 266, 1006.  
 Brewer, Daniel, 198.  
 Brewer, David, 955.  
 Brewer, Eunice (Mrs. Robert Breck), 203, 206.  
 Brewer, Isaac, 908, 1028.  
 Brewer, Mrs., 203.  
 Breweries, 283, 484; also see Liquor.  
 Brick manufacture, 65, 66, 98, 622, 632, 753, 779, 794, 815, 876, 878, 896, 968, 1012, 1019.  
 Bridge, new "Vernon Street," 600-604.  
 Bridgeport, Conn., 539.  
 Bridges, 59, 75, 109, 198, 201, 205, 219, 275, 276, 294, 317-319, 326, 327, 375-377, 509, 540, 565, 598, 600-604, 609, 611, 636, 637, 657, 659, 688, 690, 726, 727, 734, 765, 780, 781, 793, 798, 828, 904, 909, 918, 919, 921, 924, 933, 967, 1007-1009, 1025, 1029.  
 Bridgewater, Plymouth Co., Mass., 439.  
 Brigham, D. H., 516, 544, 608.  
 Brigham, Fred, 549.  
 Brighton, Suffolk Co., Mass., 797.  
 "Brightside" Catholic Orphanage, 717, 721.  
 Brightwood, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 458, 460, 531, 647.  
 Brightwood Woodworks, 458.  
 Brimfield, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 25, 403-405, 407, 571, 803-821, 873, 928, 929, 932, 949, 989, 990, 992, 1026, 1027.  
 Brimfield Cheese Factory, 815.  
 Brimfield Free Grammar School, 820.  
 Brimfield State Forest, 993.  
 Brimfield and Steerage Rock, 803-821.  
 Brimstone Hill, 631.  
 British Military Cross, 597.  
 Brookfield, Worcester Co., Mass., 103, 106, 138-141, 143, 159, 164, 198, 215, 217, 224, 232, 279, 292, 777, 789, 811, 816, 829, 927, 949, 952, 1019.  
 Brookline, Norfolk Co., Mass., 651, 652.  
 Brooks family, 455.  
 Brooks, George, 869.  
 Brooks, Joseph J., 1046.  
 Brooks, Joshua L., 1017, 1020.  
 Brooks, Samuel D., 933.  
 Brooks, William H., 437, 636, 651, 712.  
 Broom corn and brooms, 249, 250, 270, 271, 632, 633, 664, 896.  
 Brown, Abner, 932.  
 Brown, Colonel, 1006.  
 Brown, Cyril, 815.  
 Brown, Ebenezer, 1036.  
 Brown house, 668.  
 Brown, John, 19, 346, 356-360, 486-488, 582, 612.  
 Brown, Joseph, 960.  
 Brown, Nelson, 444.  
 Brown, Phoebe Hinshaw, 934.  
 Brown, Plumb, 799.  
 Brown, Samuel, 19.  
 Brown University, 916, 1044.  
 Brownstone quarries, and East Longmeadow, 843-849.  
 Brush Hill, 1011.  
 Bryan, William Jennings, 772.  
 Bryant, David, 296.  
 Bryant, John, 578.  
 Bryant, Mary, 578.  
 Bryant, William Cullen, 295.  
 Buchholz, Herman, 463.  
 Buchholz, Phillip H., 463.  
 Buck Hill, 783.  
 Buckingham, Duke of, 18, 19.  
 Buell, Phineas, 760.  
 Buffalo, N. Y., 767.  
 Builders and architects, 457-459, 478, 523, 551, 712, 747, 756, 836, 904, 916; also see Carpentry.  
 Bulfinch, Charles, 747.  
 Bulkley, George G., xv.  
 Bull, David, 221.  
 Bull, Joseph, 416.  
 Bull, Nehemiah, 741.  
 Bull Run, battle of, 421, 425, 473.  
 Bump, Mercy Lavinia ("Mrs. Tom Thumb"), 663.  
 Bumpstead, Jeremiah, 931.  
 Bumpstead, Joseph, 931.  
 Bumstead, S. S., 515.  
 Bungy Hill, 945.  
 Bunker Hill, battle of, 217, 471.  
 Burgess, John W., 769.  
 Burgess, Thornton Waldo, 582.  
 Burglaries, 223, 282, 283, 438, 443, 446, 549.  
 Burgoyne, John, 360, 780, 956, 1006, 1009.  
 Burke Brothers, 474.  
 Burke, "English Irishman," 702.  
 Burleigh, C. H., 870.

- Burns, Arthur, 641, 642.  
 Burns, Louisa (Mrs. Ethan Samuel Chapin), 362.  
 Burns, Mr., 474.  
 Burns, Rev., 955.  
 Burr, John, 26, 57.  
 Burr, Jonathan, 908.  
 Burr, President, of Princeton, 560.  
 Burroughs, Stephen, 912.  
 Burt, Aaron, 845.  
 Burt, Calvin, 892.  
 Burt, Deacon, 845.  
 Burt, Elijah, 844.  
 Burt family, 891.  
 Burt, Gideon, 331.  
 Burt, Henry, 58, 77, 90.  
 Burt, Jonathan, 78, 149, 844.  
 Burt, Moses, 1024.  
 Burt, Nathaniel, 885, 888.  
 Burt, Samuel, 277.  
 Burt, Sarah, Mrs., 888.  
 Burt, Sylvia (Mrs. Daniel Lombard), 336.  
 Burt, Walter, 868, 1038.  
 Burt's Mill, 1028.  
 Burying grounds; see Cemeteries.  
 Butcher, Benjamin Franklin, 635, 760.  
 Butchers, 484, 701.  
 Butler, Daniel, 796.  
 Butler, Joseph, 263.  
 Butler, William H., 751.  
 Butterfield woman, 380.  
 Buttery Brook, 670.  
 Buttons, manufacture of, 891.  
 Byers, James, 633.  
 Byron, Napoleon, 457.  
  
 Cabana, Eleanor, 611.  
 Cabinetmakers; see Furniture.  
 Cable, John, 24, 57, 777, 997.  
 Cabot Company, 634.  
 Cabot family, 636.  
 Cabot Guards, 643.  
 Cabotville, Hampden Co., Mass., 315, 344, 361, 362, 631, 633-636, 643.  
 Caldwell, John, 790.  
 Calhoun, Simeon Howard, 414, 417.  
 Calhoun, William B., 278, 569.  
 California, 316, 320, 329, 408, 417-419, 488, 653, 771, 961.  
 Calkins Pond, 961.  
 Calkins, Rufus, 919.  
 Callahan, John A., 713.  
 Callender, Elisha, 779, 1004.  
 Calvin, John, 339.  
 Cambridge, Middlesex Co., Mass., 25, 127, 178, 179, 222, 268, 637, 847, 911, 962, 1002.  
 Cambridge University, Eng., 61.  
 Camp Bartlett, 754.  
 Campanile Tower, 436, 550, 551, 553, 583.  
 Campbell, David, 793.  
 Canada, 144, 157-159, 195, 197, 229, 278, 314, 316, 356, 359, 364, 394, 467, 486, 618, 664, 721, 739, 825, 831, 847, 885, 953, 977, 1006, 1020; also see French-Canadians.  
 Canal Village, Hampden Co., Mass., 670.  
 Canals, 222, 223, 245, 263, 275, 279, 280, 287, 296, 300, 376, 394, 633, 639, 659, 668-670, 684, 685, 714, 722-726, 748, 766, 923, 960, 975, 978, 979, 1011.  
 Canandaigua, N. Y., 857.  
 Candy manufacturers and dealers, 499, 516, 517, 549.  
 Cannibal Indians, 127.  
 Canvas goods manufacture, 753.  
 Cape Ann, 21, 298.  
 Cape Antonio, 294.  
 Cape Cod, 915.  
 Carelas, Theodore, 465.  
 Carew, Frank, 325.  
 Carew, Joseph, 324.  
 Carew Manufacturing Company, 324.  
 Cargill, Cleveland and Company, 751.  
 Carlisle, Pa., 560.  
 Carlson, Gabriel, 499.  
 Carmichael, J. H., 563.  
 Carmody farm, 870.  
 Carnegie, Andrew, 580, 583, 584.  
 Carnegie Foundation, 1010.  
 Carpenter, Jesse, 864.  
 Carpenter, John, 331.  
 Carpentry, 62, 313, 351, 457, 533, 733, 807, 865, 896, 945; also see Builders.  
 Carriage manufacture, see Wagonmaking.  
 Carroll, James B., 475.  
 Carter, Elias, 807.  
 Carter, James, 795.  
 Carter, N. P. Ames, xvi.  
 Carteret, John, 855.  
 Caruso, Enrico, 481.  
 Cassavetes, Nicholas, 467.  
 Cattle (including oxen), 28, 41, 46, 47, 59, 64-66, 82, 83, 114, 118-120, 128, 141, 142, 159, 165, 172, 235, 245, 250, 251, 261, 268, 276, 296, 299, 331, 344, 373, 376, 402, 403, 541, 609, 627, 642, 670, 701, 742, 767, 777, 783, 784, 792, 793, 797, 799, 804, 810, 812, 815, 819, 846, 879, 887, 893, 896, 897, 914, 916, 920, 935, 939, 945, 967, 968, 997, 1003, 1006, 1017-1019, 1037.  
 Cattle marks, 114.  
 Causeway, the, 789.  
 Cedar Swamp, 914, 921.  
 "Cellar Side," 733.  
 Cement manufacture and use, 668, 848.  
 Cemeteries, 29, 60, 62, 196, 260, 271, 281-283, 324, 332, 355, 380, 390, 391, 428, 484, 568-570, 612, 781, 782, 789, 791, 812, 827, 834, 838, 847, 849, 874, 883, 885, 902, 914, 917, 919, 950, 957, 959, 963, 969, 976, 1000.

- Centennial Exposition of 1876, 515, 704.  
 Chadwick, Ben, 761.  
 Chadwick, Henry, 755.  
 Chaffee, Comfort, 866, 867.  
 Chaffee family, 868.  
 Chamberlain, Daniel Henry, 876.  
 Champagne, Eugene, 663.  
 Champlain, Lake, 157, 158, 197.  
 Champlain, Samuel de, 197.  
 Chandler, Dimond, 891.  
 Chandler, John, 825, 827, 828.  
 Chapin, Abel, 620, 624, 626.  
 Chapin, Arthur B., 712.  
 Chapin, Austin, 627.  
 Chapin Banking and Trust Company, 923.  
 Chapin banks, various, 510, 684, 923.  
 Chapin, Caleb, 623.  
 Chapin, Charles O., 922.  
 Chapin, Chester W., 269, 325-327, 344, 519, 520, 562, 589, 923.  
 Chapin, David, 618.  
 Chapin, Dorcas (Mrs. Chester W.), 562, 565.  
 Chapin, Edward, 625.  
 Chapin, Elisha, 327, 623.  
 Chapin, Ensign, 360.  
 Chapin, Ephraim, 327, 624, 625.  
 Chapin, Erastus, 327, 328.  
 Chapin, Ethan Samuel, 360-362.  
 Chapin, Ezekiel, 621.  
 Chapin, Frederick Wilcox, 563.  
 Chapin Hall, 631.  
 Chapin, Hannah (Mrs. John Sheldon), 617.  
 Chapin, Henry, 470, 617, 619.  
 Chapin house, 588.  
 Chapin, Japhet, 225, 617, 619, 620, 624, 626.  
 Chapin, Marvin, 362, 364, 519.  
 Chapin, Mr., 632, 684.  
 Chapin, Moses, 623.  
 Chapin, Pelatiah, 626, 910.  
 Chapin, Phineas, 626.  
 Chapin, S., 627.  
 Chapin, Samuel, 57, 59, 77, 89, 90, 97, 146, 148, 149, 172, 360, 619, 734.  
 Chapin, Shem, 620.  
 Chapin, Sidney, 632.  
 Chapin, Thomas, 620.  
 Chapin, W. A. R., 597, 610.  
 Chapin and Gould Paper Company, 970.  
 Chapman, Content (Mrs. Timothy Mather Cooley), 858.  
 Chapman, John ("Johnny Appleseed"); see Chapman, Jonathan.  
 Chapman, Jonathan ("Johnny Appleseed"), 351-356, 613.  
 Chapman, Judge, 958.  
 Chapman, Nathaniel, 351, 354.  
 Chapman, Perces, 352, 355.  
 Chapman, Reuben Atwater, 346, 347, 569, 970.  
 Hampden—67  
 Chapman Valve Company, 515.  
 Charcoal manufacture, 970, 993.  
 Charitable Mechanics' Fair of 1896, 524.  
 Charles I, King, 5, 18, 177, 182.  
 Charles II, King, 18, 19, 79, 177, 178, 180, 181.  
 Charles, Nathaniel, 811.  
 Charles River, 18, 25.  
 Charleston, S. C., 316, 337.  
 Charlestown, Suffolk Co., Mass., 21.  
 "Charlestown, Virginia," 346.  
 Charter, Daniel, 407, 408.  
 Chase, John, 633, 634, 673.  
 Chase, W. A., 710.  
 Chateau Thierry, France, 754.  
 Chatham Four Corners, N. Y., 286.  
 Chauncey Allen Park, 756.  
 Chauncey, President, of Harvard, 560.  
 Cheese manufacture, 1041.  
 Cheever, Colonel, 215.  
 Chemical Company, 718.  
 Chemical manufacture, 1011, 1016.  
 Chemical Paper Company, 718.  
 Cherry Lane Cemetery, 569.  
 Cherry Valley Reservoir, 540, 922.  
 Chester, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 275, 315, 571, 752, 825-839, 1006.  
 Chester Center, Hampden Co., Mass., 826, 827, 829, 831, 833-835, 837-839.  
 Chester Factories, 836, 837.  
 Chester Glass Company, 836.  
 Chester Granite Company, 837.  
 Chester Granite Quarries Company, 837.  
 Chester Granite and Polishing Works, 837.  
 Chester Hill, 838.  
 Chester Village, Hampden Co., Mass., 835, 836.  
 Chester, with its emery mines, 825-839.  
 Chesterfield, Hampshire Co., Mass., 829.  
 Chesterfield, N. H., 1019.  
 Chestnut Hill, 985.  
 Chicago, Ill., 286, 311, 329, 502, 510, 521-523, 656, 935.  
 Chickwallop, Indian chief, 126.  
 Chicopee, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 31, 98, 169, 218, 219, 268, 278, 283, 319, 327, 361, 387, 394, 416, 457, 459, 492, 493, 499, 544, 604, 606, 607, 690, 923, 949, xvi.  
 Chicopee Almshouse, 658.  
 Chicopee banks, 634, 659, 664.  
 Chicopee Brook, 927.  
 Chicopee Center, Hampden Co., Mass., 314, 617, 658, 660.  
 Chicopee Falls, 4, 23, 232, 314, 315, 493, 508, 618, 631, 633, 635-637, 653, 655, 657-663, 907, 1014, xvi.  
 Chicopee High School, 627, 637, 658, 664.  
 Chicopee Hill, 805.  
 "Chicopee House" (jail), 441.  
 Chicopee Manufacturing Company, 633, 663, 664.



- Chicopee Plains, 999.  
 Chicopee, population, 639, 664.  
 Chicopee River, 4, 46, 76, 110, 168, 232, 238, 271, 278, 319, 339, 531, 587, 617, 619, 621, 625, 633, 636, 639, 655, 806, 907-909, 919-921, 924, 927, 930, 949, 961.  
 Chicopee and Skipmuck, 617-664.  
 Chicopee Street; see Chicopee.  
 Chicopee Town Hall, 657.  
 Childs, Prescott, 719.  
 China, and the Chinese, 329, 417-419, 421, 453-455, 502, 584, 585, 605, 932.  
 Chung, Daniel McLean, 455.  
 Chung Mun Teow, 455.  
 Church, Benjamin, 878.  
 Church family, 854.  
 Church denominations:  
   Advent Christian, 959.  
   Adventist, 403, 809, 944, 1035.  
   Apostle, 453.  
   Baptist, 277, 421, 489, 501, 546, 566, 569, 631, 637, 653, 658, 668, 747, 779, 781, 835, 837, 844, 845, 857, 869, 876, 878, 930, 959, 968, 969, 977, 985, 990, 991, 1004, 1019, 1033, 1040.  
   Catholic, 65, 345, 393-395, 453, 459, 460, 472, 474, 481, 492, 502, 503, 566, 567, 623, 656, 664, 682, 717, 719, 782, 788, 837, 847, 902, 934, 958, 959, 961, 1010.  
   Christian Science, 568, 902.  
   Congregational, 203, 283, 344, 441, 486, 487, 489, 500, 567, 631, 658, 682, 695, 698, 699, 717, 747, 779, 781, 829, 835, 837, 844, 846, 847, 874, 878, 886, 914, 930, 932, 944, 952, 958, 969, 976, 984, 990, 1009, 1029.  
   Episcopal, 452, 567, 568, 631, 635, 637, 782, 902.  
   Greek Orthodox, 468.  
   Jehovah's Witnesses, 837.  
   Jewish, 484, 485.  
   Lutheran, 464, 501, 847.  
   Methodist, 204, 489, 501, 565, 566, 631, 658, 747, 748, 779, 781, 782, 796, 830, 835, 837, 846, 869, 878, 915, 916, 921, 934, 944, 959, 969, 979, 991, 1009, 1035, 1040, 1042-1047.  
   Millerites, 869, 1035.  
   Mohammedan, 502, 504.  
   Moravian, 809.  
   Presbyterian, 73, 359, 829, 952.  
   Quakers, 106, 107, 358, 738.  
   Restorationists, 991.  
   Salvation Army, 392, 501.  
   Shakers, 848, 849.  
   Swedenborgian, 352.  
   Union Evangelical, 959.  
   Unitarian, 291, 297, 323, 324, 330, 339, 347, 413, 566, 631, 641, 644.  
   United Brethren, 809.  
   Universalist, 296, 341, 461, 566, 631, 867, 934, 991, 1035.  
 Church and religion, miscellaneous:  
   "Anabaptists," 990.  
   Bells on churches, see Bells.  
   Blasphemy, penalty for, 73, 149.  
   Book of Common Prayer, 19.  
   Camp meetings, 809, 1035.  
   Church moved from Suffield, 780.  
   Church organ manufacture, 752.  
   Churches as refuge from flood, 609.  
   Episcopacy opposed by John Hampden, 3.  
   Forty steeples visible, 856, 985.  
   Heresy, 19, 61, 89-99, 202.  
   International Y. M. C. A. Training School, 557.  
   Meetinghouses (town and church), see Meetinghouses, in main index.  
   Old forms discarded, 17.  
   Passionist Monastery, 1010.  
   Pilgrims, 856.  
   Prayer when in danger, 20.  
   Profanity, 57, 792, 796, 830, 865.  
   Protestants, 453, 459, 460, 464, 472, 500, 653, 658, 664.  
   Puritans, 19, 29, 57, 66, 79, 92, 107, 110, 112, 177, 178, 205, 360, 479, 529, 575, 581, 583, 628.  
   Religion taught in day schools, 270.  
   Rescue Mission, 392, 393.  
   Revival of 1822, 867.  
   Ritualism, 18.  
   Sabbath from sundown to sundown, 261, 263, 627, 898, 1037.  
   Sabbath observance, 98, 106, 107, 133, 260, 267, 306, 421, 547, 548, 715, 742, 766, 792, 895, 914, 998, 1032.  
   Sacramental charges paid in wheat, 106.  
   School for Christian Workers, 557.  
   "Separates," 930, 977.  
   Sisters of St. Joseph, 472.  
   Sunday schools, 209, 338, 341, 565, 767, 784, 809, 1036.  
   Swearing, see Profanity.  
   Ten acres for church, 789.  
   Trinitarians, 297, 339.  
   Wesleyan Praying Band, 921.  
 Churches in Agawam, 777-782.  
   Blandford, 789-791, 799, 800.  
   Brimfield, 806-809.  
   Chester, 827-830, 834, 835, 837.  
   Chicopee, 617, 621-632, 637, 641, 644, 645, 653, 658, 664.  
   East Longmeadow, 844-849.  
   Granville, 854, 855, 857, 858.  
   Hampden, 863-869.  
   Holland, 874, 876-878.  
   Holyoke, 668, 669, 682, 683, 695, 698, 699, 701, 717.  
   Longmeadow, 884-890, 892-895, 902.  
   Ludlow, 909-917, 921, 923.  
   Monson, 928-930, 932, 934.  
   Montgomery, 944.  
   Palmer, 952-955, 957-959.



- Russell, 968, 969.  
 Southwick, 976, 977, 979, 1019.  
 Springfield, 35, 45, 46, 61-63, 74, 77-79, 89-91, 149, 150, 167, 168, 200-209, 260-262, 268, 269, 271, 272, 284, 285, 322-324, 334, 339-343, 345, 347, 356, 392-395, 420, 453, 459-461, 464, 468, 469, 472, 481-487, 489-494, 496, 498, 500-504, 520, 538, 565-570, 609.  
 Tolland, 984, 985.  
 Wales, 990-992.  
 West Springfield, 998-1004, 1009, 1010, 1019.  
 Westfield, 736-743, 746, 747, 748, 766, 767.  
 Wilbraham, 1025-1029, 1032-1037, 1040, 1042, 1043.  
 Churches, individual:  
   Bethesda Lutheran, 501.  
   Cabot Street, 701.  
   Christ Church (Brimfield), 809.  
   Christ Church Cathedral, 420, 568.  
   Colored, 359.  
   Colored African Congregational, 486.  
   Congregation Beth-El, 484, 485.  
   First Church (Longmeadow), 901.  
   First Church (Westfield), 766.  
   First Church of Christ (Granville), 854.  
   First Church of Christ the Scientist, 568.  
   Flower Memorial Methodist Episcopal, 782.  
   French Catholic, 782, 959.  
   German Lutheran, 464.  
   Highland, 570.  
   Highland Baptist, 546.  
   Holy Cross, 683.  
   Holy Trinity, 468.  
   Immaculate Conception, 494.  
   Italian Catholic, 782.  
   Kodimoh Synagogue, 484.  
   Lawrence Street Methodist, 489.  
   Memorial, 648.  
   Mount Carmel, 482.  
   North Congregational, 487.  
   Old First (Springfield), 91, 200, 202, 205, 206, 262, 285, 299, 322, 334, 338, 339, 544, 564, 565, 567, 568, 582, 601, 621, 1002.  
   Olivet, 278.  
   Our Lady of the Rosary, 494.  
   Pilgrim Baptist, 489.  
   Sacred Heart, 567.  
   St. Andrew's Episcopal, 902.  
   St. Anthony, 782.  
   St. Anthony's Roman Catholic, 503.  
   St. Bartholomew's Catholic, 959.  
   St. Benedict's, 394.  
   St. David's Episcopal, 782.  
   St. George, 468, 469.  
   St. Jean de Baptist (Ludlow), 923.  
   St. Jerome's, 682.  
   St. John's, 491.  
   St. Joseph's, 459.  
   St. Mary's Catholic, 902, 959.  
   St. Michael's Cathedral, 472, 566, 567.  
   St. Nicholas, 496.  
   St. Paul's Universalist, 566.  
   St. Peter and St. Paul, 496.  
   St. Thomas Aquinas, 460.  
   St. Thomas' Catholic, 959, 961.  
   St. William's, 782.  
   Sanford Street Congregational, 489.  
   Second Baptist (Palmer), 959.  
   Second Congregational (Holyoke), 698, 699, 717.  
   Skinner Memorial Chapel, 695.  
   South Church (Springfield), 336.  
   South Congregational (Springfield), 567.  
   Swedish Baptist, 501.  
   Swedish Congregational, 500.  
   Swedish Lutheran, 501, 847.  
   Swedish Methodist, 501.  
   Syrian, Carew Street, 503.  
   Trinity German Evangelical Lutheran, 464.  
   Trinity Methodist Episcopal, 565, 566.  
   Unity, Church of the, 327, 520, 565, 566, 569.  
 Churches, pastors of, see Ministers.  
 Cincinnati, Ohio, 329, 333.  
 Ciouci, Mr., 458.  
 Citizens, four unusual, 351-370.  
 City Aqueduct Company, 530, 531.  
 City Hospital, Springfield, 562.  
 City Library, Springfield, 575, 578-581, 589.  
 City Library Association, 518, 577, 579-581.  
 City, Springfield is made a, 385-397.  
 Civil Works Administration ("CWA"), 600.  
 Civilian Conservation Corps ("CCC"), 729, 838, 993.  
 Clap, Thomas, 200-203.  
 Clapp Tavern, 217.  
 Clark, David, 430.  
 Clark, Eli B., 632.  
 Clark, Embury P., 426, 441, 442.  
 Clark, Lucius W., 868.  
 Clark, Nathaniel, 128.  
 Clark, Oliver, 943.  
 Clark, Patty Lee Waterman, Mrs., 758.  
 Clark, William, 116.  
 Clark and Crocker, 295.  
 Clarke, Henry, 3, 116.  
 Clarke, John, 76.  
 Clarke, Joseph, 929.  
 Clark's Island, 143.  
 Clay Brook, 540.  
 Clay, Henry, negro soldier, 488.  
 Clay, Henry, statesman, 338.  
 Cleveland, Grover, 944.  
 Cleveland, Shubael, 296.  
 "Clinton," now Wales, 992.

- Clocks, 266, 283, 393, 523, 590, 627, 827, 939.  
 Cloth manufacture, 248, 252, 253, 271, 278, 283, 361, 456, 589, 620, 628, 634, 637, 639, 668, 670, 704-708, 723, 753, 780, 783, 835, 868, 878, 895, 920, 921, 930, 931, 936, 951, 959, 960, 993, 1024, 1038, 1039; also see Silk manufacture; Woolen goods and mills.  
 Clothing dealers and makers, 516, 815, 931, 970; also see Hat manufacture; Shoemakers and dealers; Tailors.  
 Clothing of the colonists, 29, 30, 114-116, 238, 271, 627, 628, 803, 809.  
 Clubs, see Societies, clubs, and organizations.  
 Coal, and coal dealers, 9, 264, 418, 493, 509, 515, 595, 609, 837.  
 Cobble Mountain Reservoir, 536, 537, 800.  
 Coburn Trolley Company, 712.  
 Coddington, Elijah, 992.  
 Coffin manufacture, 936.  
 Cohan, George M., 475.  
 Cohan, Jerry, 475.  
 Cohen, Felix, 484.  
 Cohn, Frederic, 485.  
 Cohn, Philip, 482-485.  
 Cokkinias, John D., 465.  
 College Highway, 975, 977.  
 Collins coal yard, 493.  
 Collins, E. J., 753.  
 Collins Manufacturing Company, 1041.  
 Collins Paper Company, 923, 1041.  
 Colony Hill, 109.  
 Colorado, 655.  
 Colrain, Franklin Co., Mass., 788.  
 Colton, Abishai, 865.  
 Colton, Benjamin, 1000.  
 Colton, Calvin, 1036.  
 (Colton?), Ephraim, 893.  
 Colton family, 884.  
 Colton, George, 74, 109, 272, 733.  
 Colton Hollow, 1040.  
 Colton, Jabez, 888, 891.  
 Colton, John, 889.  
 Colton, President, of Carlisle, 560.  
 Colton, Rufus, 1003.  
 Colton, Samuel, 888, 889, 893, 901.  
 Colton, Simeon, 932.  
 Columbia University, 467, 560.  
 Columbian Photo Paper Company, 753.  
 Columbus, Christopher, 476, 480.  
 Columbus, Ohio, 836, 869.  
 Comins, J. S., 711.  
 Community Chest, 598.  
 Conaty, Rev., 481.  
 Concord, Middlesex Co., Mass., 625, 743, 911.  
 Confederate Army, 337, 488, 591.  
 Conflagrations, see Fires.  
 Congamond Lakes, and Southwick, 975-979.  
 Congress, United States, and Provincial, 262, 279, 292, 293, 316, 324, 327, 328, 355, 468, 475, 508, 702, 769-771, 834, 923, 929, 956, 977, 1011.  
 Conkey Tavern, 217.  
 Conklin, Robert H., 487.  
 Connecticut (state), 28, 38, 40, 43-45, 50, 51, 55-57, 66, 67, 70, 95, 139, 145, 152-154, 165, 166, 198, 200, 204, 205, 213, 216, 232, 234, 296, 626, 733, 734, 744, 783, 787, 797, 826, 843, 863, 867, 914, 918, 927, 975, 977, 979, 989, 1038.  
 Connecticut General Court, 40, 44, 51, 55.  
 "Connecticut Path," 25.  
 Connecticut River ("Great River"), 4, 11, 13, 14, 22-25, 27, 37, 46, 66, 76, 96, 103, 105, 108, 109, 111, 113, 116, 117, 123, 124, 138, 139, 141, 156, 157, 164, 169, 172, 173, 183, 188, 192, 197, 229-232, 235, 251, 263, 279, 299, 300, 317-319, 321, 339, 374, 376, 403, 404, 507, 529, 531, 536, 540, 581, 587, 600-611, 617, 619, 621, 634, 637, 652, 657, 663, 667, 669-671, 673-680, 688, 94, 715, 721-727, 729, 736, 748, 769, 777, 778, 780, 843, 854, 870, 883, 908, 949, 967, 997, 1004, 1007, 1009, 1025, 1028, vii.  
 Connecticut River Association, 278.  
 Connecticut River, sunrise on, frontispiece Vol. I.  
 Connecticut Valley Historical Society, 389, 512, 550, 575, 588.  
 Conrad, Maurice, 462.  
 Constantine, Dimitrius V., 467.  
 Contents, table of, ix, x.  
 Converse, Benjamin, 957.  
 Converse Coal Company, 1013.  
 Converse, H. P., and Company, 600, 603.  
 Conway, Franklin Co., Mass., 249, 332, 586.  
 Conwell, Russell, 1047.  
 Cook, Aaron, 734, 736.  
 Cook, Pearly, 827.  
 Cook, Waldo Lincoln, 307, xv.  
 Cooke, Aaron, 3, 128.  
 Cooley, Benjamin, 109, 733.  
 Cooley Brook, 884.  
 Cooley, Daniel, 619.  
 Cooley, Earl, 569.  
 Cooley family, 341, 540, 854, 884, 891, 919.  
 Cooley, James P., 859.  
 Cooley, Lucy (Mrs. Nathaniel Chapman), 351.  
 Cooley, Obadiah, 153, 806.  
 Cooley, Ralph, 859.  
 Cooley, Timothy Mather, 858.  
 Coolidge, Calvin, 719, 758, 771.  
 Coolidge, Jonas, 282, 342.  
 Cooper, Ensign, 779.  
 Cooper, Thomas, 57, 62, 74, 84, 104, 129, 146-148, 172, 733, 734, 777.  
 Coopering, 845, 896.

- Copeland, A. M., 435.  
 Copeland, Alfred, 835.  
 Copeland, Alfred M., 581.  
 Copeland, Melvin, 835.  
 Corbett, partner of Pell, 551.  
 Corcoran, Brewer, 582, 589.  
 Corn, Indian, 24, 26, 27, 38-44, 50, 60, 65, 74, 75, 92, 105, 118, 124, 164, 169, 172, 236, 239, 245-247, 264, 268, 381, 534, 548, 619, 623, 624, 669, 737, 740, 742, 793, 805, 810, 844, 865, 873, 875, 927, 938, 950, 951, 1003, 1024, 1026, 1037, 1039, 1041.  
 Cornish, James, 734, 737, 739, 853.  
 Cornwallis, Charles, 956.  
 Cornwallis Day, 875.  
 Cortez, Hernando, 419.  
 Cortland Grinding Wheels Corporation, 836.  
 Cotton mills, see Cloth manufacture.  
 Counterfeiters, 749, 945, 993.  
 Court of Assistants, 22.  
 Court, City, 385.  
 Court of Common Pleas, 217.  
 Court, County, 77, 104, 106-108, 113-116, 133, 167, 170, 198, 216, 223, 435, 437-439, 442, 609.  
 Court, District, 447, 752, 792, 935.  
 Court, Domestic Relations, 447.  
 Court, General, Connecticut, 40, 44, 51, 55.  
 Court, General, Massachusetts, 3, 21-23, 27, 28, 35, 43, 44, 46, 51, 55, 56, 67-69, 85, 89, 92-95, 98, 103, 113, 114, 128, 145, 148, 149, 170, 173, 196, 197, 199, 232, 733, 734, 745, 791, 792, 805, 806, 825, 828, 833, 855, 864, 874, 927, 928, 932, 943, 944, 951, 955, 976, 991, 992, 998, 1005.  
 Court of General Sessions, 866.  
 Court of Justice, High, 177.  
 Court, Police, 447, 481.  
 Court, Probate, 447.  
 Court Square Theatre, 526.  
 Court, Superior, 443, 444, 447, 481.  
 Court, Supreme, 217, 475, 770.  
 Court, Supreme Judicial, 970.  
 Court, United States, 335, 928.  
 Courtemanche family, 455.  
 Courthouse, Hampden County, 48, 198, 221.  
 Coventry, Conn., 445.  
 Cow Pasture, Ludlow, 910.  
 Cowachuck Brook, 124.  
 Cowasset, 197.  
 Cox, Benjamin, 633.  
 Cox, Channing Harris, 604.  
 Cox, Palmer, 582.  
 Cox, Samuel, 633.  
 Crafts, Chester, 668.  
 Crafts, Roswell P. (mayor), 668, 702.  
 Crafts Tavern, 224.  
 Cranberry Pond, 985.  
 Crane Brothers, 752.  
 Crane, James A., 752.  
 Crane, Robert B., 752.  
 Crawford Pond, 961.  
 Crawford, Sarah, 353, 355.  
 Crawford, William, 952, 953.  
 Crematory, Springfield, 391.  
 Crescent Mills Village, 970.  
 Crocker, partner of Clark, 295.  
 Croix de Guerre, 596.  
 Cromwell, Oliver, 3, 95, 177.  
 Cross place, the, 799.  
 Cross, Sarah, Mrs., 939.  
 Cross, Stephen, 936-940.  
 Crossman, Henry S., 426.  
 Crowfoot, Joseph, 168.  
 Crown Point, N. Y., 856.  
 Crows, 236, 695.  
 Crumit, Frank, 904.  
 Cuba, 293, 294, 889; also see War, Spanish-American.  
 Cummings, Julius, 392, 393.  
 Currier, Reuben, 392.  
 Curtis, Ephraim, 141.  
 Curtis family, 853.  
 Curtis Island, 873.  
 Cushing, Luther Stearns, 768.  
 Cushman, E. D., Mrs. 936.  
 Cushman Mills, 936.  
 Cutler, Henry, 1041.  
 Cutlery manufacture, 314, 635.  
 Daboll, Frederick G., 538, 539.  
 Daboll, Nathan, 629.  
 Daguerreotypes, 352, 638.  
 Dahl, Axel, 501.  
 Dale, Carrie R., 934.  
 Dale, John, 328.  
 Dale, Thomas, 418.  
 Dalton, Berkshire Co., Mass., 397.  
 Damon, Isaac, 565, 1008.  
 Dams, 232, 233, 235, 536, 537, 542, 605, 606, 633, 634, 659, 669, 671, 673-685, 706, 714, 722-727, 729, 793, 800, 803, 804, 844, 909, 920, 922, 933, 959, 960, 968, 1011, 1013, 1023.  
 Dana, John Cotton, 579.  
 Danbury, Conn., 331, 446.  
 Daniel, a Scotch servant, 98.  
 Danielson Hill, 811.  
 Danielson, Sarah E. (Mrs. Lincoln), 820.  
 Danielson, Timothy, 471, 813.  
 Danielson-Lincoln Memorial, 820.  
 "Dark Corners" (Three Rivers), 959.  
 Dark days of 1780 and 1881, 933.  
 Darrick family, 945.  
 Dartmouth College, 339, 623, 812, 894, 915.  
 Dasset, alias Du Montiers, Mr., 455.  
 Davenport, Abigail, 901.  
 Davenport, John, 180, 181.  
 Davens, Robert, 742.



- Davies, Thomas F., 568, xv.  
 Davis, Emerson, 766, 767.  
 Davis, James, 879.  
 Davis, Jones S., 713.  
 Davis, Rev., 857.  
 "Davis," alias Burroughs, 912.  
 Day, F. M., Company, 993.  
 Day family, 214, 835, 1010.  
 Day, Heman, 1005.  
 Day, Luke, 217-220, 956, 1007, 1034.  
 Day, President, of Yale, 560.  
 Day, Samuel, 1000.  
 Dayville, in Chester, 835.  
 Deane Memorial Building, 799.  
 Deane, Wallace H., 799.  
 De Berry, William Nelson, 491, 492.  
 Debrowski, Martin, 493.  
 Declaration of Independence, 261, 885, 887, 889.  
 Dedham, Norfolk Co., Mass., 315, 736.  
 Deer, 118, 133, 137, 235, 237-239, 259, 264, 735, 793, 803, 805, 843, 909, 910, 915, 1023, 1032.  
 Deer Island, 590.  
 Deerfield, Franklin Co., Mass., 125, 140, 142, 144, 145, 149, 151, 157, 159, 163, 165, 173, 183, 195, 197, 229, 586, 617, 618, 755, 825, 890, 893, 901, 953.  
 Deerfield River, 722.  
 Delaware Indians, 329.  
 Dellaporta, Anthony, 482.  
 Democrats, 286, 308, 406, 770-772, 837, 838.  
 Denegri, Francis, 476, 477.  
 Denison, John, 634.  
 Denmark, and the Danes, 497, 502, 812.  
 Dentists, 485, 517, 705.  
 Denver, Colorado, 306, 721.  
 Denver, Henry, 538, 539.  
 Denver, W. J., 538.  
 Department of Welfare, Springfield, 392.  
 Depot, old Springfield, 340.  
 Depot Village, 958.  
 Desrosiers, Rose, 718.  
 Deutre, Mr., 739.  
 "Devil's half acre," 796.  
 "Devil's Stairs," 789.  
 Dewey, Thomas, 734, 737.  
 Dewolf, DeWitt Clinton, 837, 838.  
 Dewolf, Thaddeus Kingsley, 837.  
 Dexter, J. K., 425.  
 Diamond Match factory, 599.  
 Dickens, Charles, 287, 288.  
 Dickinson, Baxter, 846.  
 Dickinson family, 976.  
 Dickinson, Francke W., 427, 457, 551.  
 Dickinson, Levi, 249, 250, 678.  
 Dickinson Manufacturing Company, 462.  
 Dickinson, Mr., 462, 541.  
 Dickinson Paper Company, 711.  
 Dickman, T., 294.  
 Dilworth's Spelling Book, 1025.  
 Dimmick, Shubael, 989.  
 Dimmock's Hill, 401.  
 Dingley, Nelson, 771.  
 Dinosaur Park, Holyoke, 704.  
 Diseases, see Medical profession.  
 Distilleries, 250, 275, 283, 296, 329, 669, 779, 783, 792, 815, 919, 1003, 1013, 1038, 1039.  
 Divining-rods, witch hazel, 379, 380.  
 Dixwell, Judge, 182.  
 Doctors of medicine; see Medical profession.  
 Dog show, 390.  
 Dogs, 83, 120, 148, 168, 197, 198, 235, 236, 239, 373, 635, 668, 751, 796, 870, 950.  
 Doherty, John J., 472.  
 Donahue, Florance, 474.  
 Donahue, John W., 474.  
 Donnelly, Hugh, 473, 475.  
 Donohue, Thomas, 545.  
 Doolittle, Jimmy, 599.  
 Doolittle, Mr., 539.  
 Dorchester, Anthony, 78, 83, 104, 105, 172.  
 Dorchester, Suffolk Co., Mass., 21, 38, 61, 90.  
 Dore, partner of Smith, 924.  
 Dougherty, Harold T., xvi.  
 Douglas, Stephen Arnold, 311.  
 Douglass, Frederick, 487.  
 Dowling, B. C., 487.  
 Doyle, William, 221.  
 Drake's gas machine, 1013.  
 Draper, Horace T., 419.  
 Drew, Colonel, 429.  
 Driscoll, J. R., 478.  
 Drum industry, and Granville, its home, 853-859.  
 Drumlins, 14.  
 Drums, manufacture of, 859.  
 Dry goods dealers, 482, 503, 516, 517, 963; also see Merchants, general.  
 Du Charme family, 455.  
 Dudley, Thomas, 67, 92.  
 Dug Hill, 800.  
 Dumbleton, John, 104.  
 Du Montiers, alias Dasset, Mr., 455.  
 Dunbar, battle of, 51.  
 Dunham, Mr., 993.  
 Dunn, Mr., 1045.  
 Durham, Conn., 853, 983.  
 Durkee, Phineas, 992.  
 Duryea, J. Frank, 523-525.  
 Duryea Motor Wagon Company, 525.  
 Dutch, the, 37, 44, 68, 97, 126, 127, 164, 223, 265, 277, 916; also see Netherlands.  
 Dwight, Colonel, 268.  
 Dwight Company, 634.  
 Dwight, Edmund, 330, 633, 635.  
 Dwight, Elisha, 845.  
 Dwight, Elizabeth (Mrs. Joseph Lathrop), 1002.



- Dwight, Frederick, 329.  
 Dwight, Henry, 329.  
 Dwight, James, 266, 268.  
 Dwight, James Sanford, 330.  
 Dwight, James Scutt, 421.  
 Dwight, John, 268.  
 Dwight, Jonathan, 213, 221, 222, 261, 266, 268, 316, 330, 333, 334, 566, 633, 928.  
 Dwight, Josiah, 266, 330.  
 Dwight, Lucinda (Mrs. Bezaleel Howard), 208, 334.  
 Dwight, Minnie R., Mrs., xvi.  
 Dwight, Mr., 267, 268, 275, 282, 493, 589.  
 Dwight, President, of Yale, 560.  
 Dwight, Sarah (Mrs. George Bancroft), 316.  
 Dwight, Seth, 1002.  
 Dwight, Simeon, 928.  
 Dwight, Thomas, 266.  
 Dwight, Timothy, 123, 259, 263, 747, 857.  
 Dwight, W. G., 702, 719.  
 Dwight, William, 420, 421.  
 Dyeing, 343.  
 Dyson, Harriet (Mrs. Joseph Buell Ely), 772.  
 Earle, Rev., 405.  
 Early eighteen hundreds, the, 275-288.  
 Early, Jubal Anderson, 421.  
 Early varied manufactures of Wales, 989-993.  
 Early woolen mills of Monson, 927-940.  
 Earnshaw, Marion (Bellamy), Mrs., 653.  
 Earthquake of 1883, 933.  
 East Amherst, Hampshire Co., Mass., 217.  
 East Brimfield, Hampden Co., Mass., 4.  
 East Brookfield, Worcester Co., Mass., 491.  
 East Granville, Hampden Co., Mass., 856, 857.  
 East Hartford, Conn., 446.  
 East Hill, 401, 927.  
 East Indies, 327, 331; also see India.  
 East Longmeadow, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 9, 14, 497, 500, 569, 843-849, 900.  
 East Longmeadow, and the brownstone quarries, 843-849.  
 East Longmeadow, population, 843.  
 East Springfield, Hampden Co., Mass., 525.  
 East Windsor, Conn., 204.  
 Eastern States Agricultural and Industrial Exposition, 409, 1011, 1017-1020.  
 Eastern States Coliseum, 613.  
 Eastern States Exposition, and West Springfield, 997-1020.  
 Easthampton, Hampshire Co., Mass., 508, 669.  
 Eastman, Deacon, 186.  
 Eaton, George, 420.  
 Eaton, William, 812.  
 Eddy, Mary Baker (Glover), Mrs., 568.  
 Eddy, Wilson, 509, 510.  
 Eddy, Zachariah, 1019.  
 Education and institutions, 557-551; also see Schools.  
 Edward, King, 1014.  
 Edwards, Alexander, 82.  
 Edwards, Clarence Ransom, 758.  
 Edwards, "Grandpa," 330.  
 Edwards, Jonathan, 79, 204, 269, 741, 790, 854, 1000.  
 Edwards, Sarah, Mrs., 82.  
 Edwin Smith Historical Museum, 755.  
 Eels, Cushing, 798.  
 Egypt, 513.  
 Ehraman, Eugene, 588.  
 Ehrlich, Moses, 484.  
 Eighteen hundreds, the early, 275-288.  
 Eighth Turnpike Corporation, 967.  
 Elbow Brook, 803.  
 "Elbow tract," Palmer, 949-963.  
 Eldredge, George D., 658.  
 Eldridge, Mr., 636.  
 Electrical equipment, 517, 526, 1016.  
 Electricity, 752; also see Lighting; Power.  
 Elim, Mansour, 502.  
 Eliot, Charles William, 703.  
 Eliot, John, 51, 139, 178, 298, 999.  
 Ellington, Conn., 1044.  
 Ellis, A. D., Mrs., 936.  
 Ellis, Carlos B., 561, xv.  
 Ellis, Dwight, 936.  
 Ellis, George, 936.  
 Elmwood Park, Holyoke, 713.  
 Ely, Alfred, 932.  
 Ely, Enoch, 668.  
 Ely, Henry, 772.  
 Ely, Joseph, 678.  
 Ely, Joseph Buell, 443, 771-773, 837, 838.  
 Ely, Levi, 1006.  
 Ely, Mr., 105, 266, 589, 667.  
 Ely, Nathaniel, 113, 169, 733.  
 Ely, Sam, 671, 673, 678.  
 Ely, Samuel, 98, 172, 216, 548, 746, 1000.  
 Ely, Sarah, 692.  
 Emergency Relief Administration (ERA), 600.  
 Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 582.  
 Emerson's Arithmetic, 630.  
 Emery, Charles, 417, 418, 578.  
 Emery mines; see Chester, with its emery mines, 825-839.  
 Emery, Robert, 331.  
 Emerzian family, 453.  
 Emmet, Robert, 474.  
 Endicott, John, 19, 21, 67, 178, 179, 374.  
 Enfield, Conn., 119, 125, 275, 280, 318, 602, 619, 844, 848, 898, 923, 1027.  
 Enfield Falls, 44, 56, 116, 229, 230, 280, 317, 318, 889.  
 England, and cities of, 5, 17-20, 22, 36, 51, 55, 59, 61, 65, 73, 74, 78, 79, 92-98, 110,

- 112-114, 117, 128, 131, 132, 166, 167, 177-184, 195, 196, 199, 205, 213, 237, 250, 253, 254, 285, 287, 294, 313, 325, 326, 333, 334, 360, 417, 452, 461, 498, 525, 565, 576, 597, 624, 635, 706, 848, 875, 889, 909, 910, 915, 923, 955, 961, 975, 976, 1013, 1032; also see Gr. Brit.
- English Grass Cave, 945.
- Ensign Box Company, 752.
- Entwistle, Frank, 936.
- Erard, Philip V., 609.
- Erwin's Brook, 803.
- Essex County, Mass., 145.
- Ethnological and Natural History Museum, 586.
- Europe, 66, 79, 114, 130, 164, 167, 249, 253, 321, 329, 514, 653, 694.
- Evanston, Ill., 523.
- Events and people, 311-347.
- Everett, Edward, 304.
- Ewing, George C., 671, 673.
- Ezekiel, Ezekiel M., 485.
- "Factory Ground," Agawam, 780.
- Factory Village, Springfield, 278, 285.
- Fagnent, Dr., 458.
- Fairbanks Scale Company, 671.
- "Fairfield" (Chester), 828.
- Fairfield (Woronoco), 968.
- Fairfield Mills, 970.
- Fairfield, Mr., 668.
- Fairfield, Roswell M., 703, 968.
- Fairs, 799, 835, 899.
- Fairview, 4, 658.
- Fall River Commission, 772.
- Falley family, 835, 967.
- Falley, Lieut., 746.
- Falley, Richard, 743, 944.
- Falley's Cross Roads, 835, 836.
- Fallon, Mr., 472.
- Falls Woods, 231.
- Fallsfield, near South Hadley, 230.
- Falmouth, Barnstable Co., Mass., 294.
- Fanos, Anestis, 467.
- Farm machinery; see Agricultural machinery.
- Farming; see Agriculture.
- Farmington River, 984, 985.
- Farnham, Theodore, 345.
- Farr Alpaca Company, 704-706, 710, 718, 723.
- Farr, Herbert M., 704.
- Farragut, David Glasgow, 419.
- Farrington, Zeno, 992.
- Fauna of Holyoke and Hampden County, 698.
- Fausey, John R., xvi.
- Fay, partner of Merrick, 931.
- Fay, Spofford and Thorndike, 600.
- Federal Hill, Springfield, 216.
- Federal Land Bank, 598.
- Federalists, 299, 322.
- Feeding Hills, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 461, 481, 502, 536, 669, 778, 780, 781, 783, 979.
- Fellows, Richard, 806, 927, 928.
- Fences, 36, 47, 63, 64, 75, 104, 108, 109, 231, 260, 404, 413, 439, 509, 547, 714, 734, 748, 752, 765, 811, 812, 826, 845, 910, 917, 992, 1025.
- Fenton, Ephraim, 814.
- Fenwick, George, 66.
- Fern, Horace, 419.
- Ferre, Jonathan, 779.
- Ferre, Lizzie, 261.
- Ferre, Martha, 261.
- Ferrell, Mrs., 950.
- Ferrier, William, 431.
- Ferries, 105, 160, 169, 215, 221, 222, 231, 259, 657, 670, 674, 688-690, 777, 998, 1005, 1006, 1008.
- Ferry, Moody, 650.
- Ferry, Samuel, 172.
- Ferry, Thaddeus, 331.
- Fiberloid Corporation, 526.
- Field and forest, 229-241.
- Fiji Islands, 701.
- Filer, George, 106, 738.
- Financial affairs:
- Account book of Stephen Cross, 936-940.
  - Bank "holiday," 599, 600.
  - Bank stabilization, 773.
  - Bankruptcy laws, 1015.
- Banks:
- Agawam, 510.
  - Boston, 276.
  - Chapin Bank, 510.
  - Chapin Banking and Trust Company, 923.
  - Chapin Brothers, 684.
  - Chicopee, 659, 664.
  - Chicopee First National, 634.
  - Federal Land, 598.
  - Goldin's, 496.
  - Hadley Falls, 702.
  - Hadley Falls Trust Company, 718.
  - Holyoke City, 711, 718.
  - Palmer National, 962.
  - Palmer Savings, 962.
  - Springfield Coöperative, 473.
  - Springfield Five Cents Savings, 519.
  - Springfield Institution for Savings, 519.
  - Springfield Italian, 478.
  - Springfield National, 517.
  - Springfield Safe Deposit and Trust Company, 519.
  - Springfield Third National, and Trust Company, 519.
  - Western Massachusetts, and Trust Company, 600.
- Barter in general use, 106.
- Board of Trade, 715.
- Board of Underwriters, 1015.

- Bonds for railroad, 690.
- Bonds for water supply, 692.
- Building boom, 526.
- Business Men's Association, 715.
- Chamber of Commerce, 715.
- Collection agencies, illegal, 438.
- Crises, financial, 314, 368, 578, 599, 600, 692, 712, 921, 1015.
- Currency depreciation, 834, 930, 1007, 1015, 1034.
- "Dull years" before Civil War, 684.
- Financial advertising at start of World War, 307.
- Financing, James Fisk's, 305.
- Financing Memorial Bridge, 600.
- Flood losses in 1936, 610, 729.
- Frauds, Erie Railroad, 304.
- "Gold fever" of 1849, 320, 408, 418, 419, 488, 961.
- Holyoke boom collapse, 683, 684.
- Insurance, fire, 457, 519-522.
- Insurance, life, 457, 489, 502, 519, 522, 523.
- Insurance, marine, 519-522.
- Investment increase, 755.
- Investment in telephone business, 540.
- Liberty Bonds, 595, 716.
- Loan, Dutch, 223.
- Loan, English (\$500,000), 326, 923.
- Lotteries, 198, 223, 275, 276, 625, 780, 792, 1008, 1023.
- Money, abolishing of, 655.
- Money, early, 36-43, 74, 106, 125, 548, 883.
- Mortgages, 125, 133, 688.
- Municipal ownership, 659, 713.
- Municipal planning commission, 462.
- "New Hero of Wall Street," 304.
- Phelps-Gorham purchase, 857.
- Profit, abolishing of, 655.
- Real estate business in Holyoke, 683, 710, 711.
- Real estate owned by negro, 490.
- Run on a Chicopee bank, 634.
- Safe deposit vaults, 519.
- Shipping, 21, 44, 56, 66-70, 97, 116, 222, 229-231, 252, 268, 278, 280, 669, 896.
- Tariff, 66-70.
- Taxes, see Taxes and assessments.
- Trade prospects a motive for settlement, 23.
- Trading, early, 37-44, 50, 51, 55, 56, 68, 90, 96, 97, 132, 278.
- Trading houses at Enfield Falls, 44.
- Transportation of money, 276.
- Financial: also see Beavers and beaver trade; Shays' Rebellion.
- Finland, and the Finns, 497, 501.
- Fire protection, 58, 60, 209, 283-285, 344, 385, 530, 543-547, 646, 701, 716, 718, 758, 762, 766.
- Fires (conflagrations), 30, 117, 118, 138, 141, 145, 147-150, 156, 163, 220, 221, 225, 512, 517, 520-522, 543-546, 551, 568, 591, 598, 609, 611, 637, 657, 667, 701, 703, 711, 715-718, 737, 758, 808, 891, 930, 968, 1012, 1036, 1046, 1047.
- Fish and fishing, 231-235, 265, 270, 271, 296, 317, 344, 401, 504, 619, 620, 637, 645, 667, 668, 734, 755, 766, 805, 873, 896, 897, 904, 932, 949, 975, 983, 985, 1005, 1013, 1042.
- Fishing and hunting in Tolland, 983-985.
- Fishkill, N. Y., 331.
- Fisk, Franklin, 921.
- Fisk, George C., 511.
- Fisk, Gordon M., 923.
- Fisk Hill, 990.
- Fisk, James, 304, 305, 403.
- Fisk, Noyes W., 662.
- Fisk Park, Springfield, 598.
- Fisk Rubber Company, 493, 598, 660-662, 664.
- Fisk, Wilbur, 916, 1044, 1045.
- Fisk's mill, 920.
- Fitch, Arthur E., 935.
- Fitch, Elizabeth (Mrs. Edward Taylor), 737.
- Fitch, James, 737.
- Fitchburg, Worcester Co., Mass., 597.
- Fitton, James, 394.
- Fitzgerald, Chaplain, 429.
- Fitzgerald, Edward, 474.
- Fitzpatrick, John, 538, 539.
- Five Bridges Corner, 873.
- Five Mile House, 917.
- Flak, Paul, 494.
- Flax, 77, 248, 250, 252, 620, 780, 788, 810, 815, 865, 919, 951, 955, 1026, 1039; also see Linen manufacture.
- Flemming, Abraham, 830.
- Flesher, Abe, 486.
- Fletcher, Raymond, 978.
- Flint, Edward, 420.
- Flint, Jonathan, 868.
- Flood of 1695, 884.
- Flood of 1795, 940.
- Flood of 1801, 317.
- Flood of 1819, 752.
- Flood of 1869, 752, 804, 933.
- Flood of 1878, 752.
- Flood of 1927, 605, 606, 724-726.
- Flood of 1936, 604-611, 726, 727, 729, 784, 849, 971.
- Flora of Holyoke and Hampden County, 695-698.
- Florida, 443, 513.
- Florio, Carlo, 479.
- Flower, Samuel, 778.
- Flying machine of the 1820's, 293.
- Flynt Park, Monson, 934.
- Flynt, Rufus, 931, 933.
- Flynt, W. N., 934.



- Foch, Ferdinand, 553.  
 Follen, Carl, 460.  
 Food adulteration, 754.  
 Food of the colonists, 21, 39, 41, 83, 148, 160, 197, 232-234, 236, 238, 239, 245-248, 250, 251, 253-255, 265, 268, 270.  
 Football, 409.  
 Forbes and Wallace, 516-518, 608.  
 Ford, Henry, 507.  
 "Fordis," see Parker, Fordis C.  
 Forest and field, 229-241.  
 Forest Lake, 961.  
 Forest Park, Springfield, 367, 499, 540, 541, 566, 580, 599.  
 Forest protection, 28, 30, 46, 77, 118, 281, 282, 542, 548, 633, 800, 993, 1017; also see "In Field and Forest," 229-241.  
 Fort Dummer, Brattleboro, Vt., 229.  
 Fort Massachusetts, in Adams, Berkshire Co., Mass., 623.  
 Fort Missoula, Mont., 660.  
 Fort Paris, 745.  
 Fort Pynchon, Springfield, 230, 997.  
 "Fort Side," 734, 736.  
 Fort Sumter, S. C., 226, 311, 420, 486, 931.  
 Fort Wayne, Ind., 355, 356, 613.  
 Fort William Henry, N. Y., 668.  
 Fortier family, 455.  
 Forward, Abel, 976.  
 Forward, Joseph, 975.  
 Forward, Mr., 977.  
 Foskit, Stebbins, 1041.  
 Foskitts Mill, 405.  
 Foster, Isaac, 991.  
 Foster Machine Company, 753.  
 Foster, Sheriff, 369.  
 Foundries, 515, 660.  
 Four Corners, Palmer, 959.  
 Four unusual citizens, 351-370.  
 Fowler, Frances, 765.  
 Fowler, James, 755.  
 Fowler, Lucy (Mrs. Edward B. Gillett), 769.  
 Fowler, S. J., 543.  
 Fowler, Samuel, 975.  
 Fowler, Samuel J., 764.  
 Fowler, Saul, 978.  
 Fowler Tavern, 742, 754.  
 Fowler, Titus, 984.  
 Fox, Charles James, 873.  
 Foxes, 698, 803.  
 Framingham, Middlesex Co., Mass., 511.  
 France, and cities of, 20, 37, 144, 158, 166, 167, 195, 196, 225, 370, 393, 418, 467, 477, 486, 553, 590, 595, 596, 618, 635, 655, 664, 706, 712, 715, 718, 719, 753, 831, 892, 959; also see French-Canadians.  
 Franck, Harry Alverson, 582.  
 Frangeia, Peter, 502.  
 Franklin, Benjamin, 249, 635.  
 Franklin County, Mass., 158.  
 Franklin Library Association, 577.  
 Franzen, Johannes, 501.  
 Fraternal orders, see Societies, clubs, and organizations.  
 Fredette, Mr., printer, 458.  
 Freedom, Susan, 569.  
 Freeman, Bertha Mansfield, 761.  
 Frémont, John Charles, 329.  
 French, the; see France.  
 French-American College, 557.  
 French-Canadians, 455-460, 492, 1042.  
 Freshwater River, 109.  
 Frink, Mr., 668.  
 From the World War to the Tercentenary, 595-613.  
 Frome, Vicar of, 79.  
 Fruit and fruit trees, 144, 264, 351-356, 613, 779, 804, 820, 846, 895, 1038, 1041; also see Berries; also see Nurseries.  
 Fryeburg, Me., 339.  
 Fuller, Elbridge Gerry, 878.  
 Fuller, Elisha, 1040.  
 Fuller, Henry, 761.  
 Fuller, Mr., 912.  
 Fuller, William, 853.  
 Fuller's Tavern, 914.  
 "Fuller's Village," Holland, Mass., 879.  
 Furniture, and cabinetmaking, 313, 319, 458, 460, 463, 494, 518, 566, 588, 589-591, 827, 836, 895, 896, 901, 919, 938, 984, 1019.  
 Gagnier, Christopher I., 457, 458.  
 Gagnier, Louis G., 459, 460.  
 Galligher, M. P., 472.  
 Game protection, 237, 238, 1042.  
 Games, manufacture of, 514.  
 Gannon, Cyrus, 870.  
 Garden Brook, Springfield, 29, 275, 342, 531, 1013; also see Town Brook.  
 Gardner, Humphrey, 990.  
 Gardner, Mathew, 1039.  
 Garfield, James Abram, 489, 762.  
 Garnier, L. G., 782.  
 Gas manufacture, 543, 713, 1012-1016.  
 Gasoline dealers, 504, 1016.  
 Gates, Ephraim, 955.  
 Gay, Molly (Mrs. John Ballantine), 742.  
 Gaylord, Chester, 186.  
 Geisel, partner of Kalmbach, 462.  
 Geisel, Theodore, 464.  
 Gelin, William, 484.  
 Gemeunders, Albrecht, 461.  
 Gemeunders, George, 460.  
 General Fibre Box Company, 607, 1016.  
 Geology of the region, 9-14.  
 George, John, 503.  
 George, Lake, 158, 623, 888.  
 "George Walter Vincent Smith Gallery," 575, 584, 585.  
 Georgia, 838.



- Germania Mills, 718.  
 Germany, and Germans, 316, 391, 460-464, 467, 477, 481, 514, 525, 559, 595, 596, 653, 660, 692, 716, 744, 769, 1006.  
 Gettysburg, Pa., 304, 421.  
 Ghourayeb, Albert, 503.  
 Gibbons family, 854.  
 Gibbs, Abner, 759.  
 Gilbert, C. N., 543, 1012, 1015, 1016.  
 Gilbert family, 1019.  
 Gilbert, John, 168.  
 Gilbert, Miss (Mrs. Miles Morgan), 74.  
 Gilbert and Barker Company, 543, 1012, 1015, 1016.  
 Gilkey, James Gordon, 567, xv.  
 Gillett, Edward B., 437, 752, 755, 760, 769.  
 Gillett, Frederick Huntington, 755, 769-71.  
 Gillett, Samuel, 853.  
 Gillett, Sarah, 753.  
 Gillette, Lucy, xvi.  
 Gillett's Corner, 979.  
 Gilmore, Dwight O., 541.  
 Gilmore Hotel and Hall, 459, 461.  
 Glaciers, 11, 12, 14, 873.  
 Gladden, Washington, 581.  
 "Glasgow" (Blandford), 789, 791.  
 Glasgow Hill, 679, 792.  
 Glasgow Mountain, 967, 970.  
 Glass manufacture, 836, 919.  
 Gleason, Isaac, 168.  
 Glendale Roads, 870, 1041.  
 Glickman, Alfred L., 482.  
 Glickman, Henry, 482.  
 Glove manufacture, 970.  
 Glover, Pelatiah, 77, 90, 105-107, 114, 146, 168, 172, 589.  
 Goat Rocks, 869.  
 Gobble Mountain, 839.  
 Goffe, William, 177-179, 182, 184, 185, 189.  
 "Gold fever" of 1849, 320, 408, 418, 419, 488, 961.  
 Gold mine tradition, 945.  
 Goldin, Joseph, 496.  
 Goldschmidt, Otto, 344.  
 Golf, 542, 660, 751, 754, 799, 903, 924, 985.  
 Goodell, Abel, 929.  
 Goodman, Mr., 631.  
 "Goodman" and "Goodwife," 195.  
 Goodnow, Isaac, 1046.  
 Goodrich, John, 332.  
 Goodrich, Samuel Griswold ("Peter Parley"), 630.  
 Goodwell, John, 866.  
 Goodyear, Charles, 365-370.  
 Goose Pond, 277, 406, 1025.  
 Gordon, Alexander, 832.  
 Gordon Hill, 832.  
 Gordon, John, 832.  
 Gore Lane, 793.  
 Gorgis, Hercules, 468.  
 Gorham, George, 944.  
 Gorham, Nathaniel, 857.  
 Gould, Jay, 304.  
 Gower, Fred, 539, 540.  
 Grafton, Worcester Co., Mass., 24, 989.  
 Grains, see Barley; Corn, Indian; Oats; Rye; Wheat.  
 Granby, Hampshire Co., Mass., 238, 690, 911, 918, 978.  
 Granrud, John, 502.  
 Grant, Ulysses Simpson, 635, 1011.  
 Granville, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 853-859, 983, 985.  
 Granville Center, 4.  
 Granville Corners, 859, 969.  
 Granville, home of the drum industry, 853-859.  
 Granville "Jubilee," 858, 859.  
 Granville, population, 856.  
 Granville, N. Y., 857.  
 Granville, Ohio, 858.  
 Granville, Zantford D., 599.  
 Gray, James Philip, 590.  
 Gray, Mr., 967.  
 Great Barrington, Berkshire Co., Mass., 394.  
 Great Britain and the British, 17, 65, 166, 196, 229, 247, 291, 316, 332, 333, 418, 586, 743, 834, 883, 915, 928, 955, 956, 1006, 1014.  
 Great Brook, 979.  
 Great Falls, 949.  
 Great River, same as Connecticut River, *q. v.*  
 Greece, and the Greeks, 464-469, 503, 504, 552, 932.  
 Greeley, Horace, 303, 306, 509.  
 Green, Addison L., 758.  
 Green, Duff, 324.  
 Green, Joseph, 825.  
 Green, Mason Arnold, 581.  
 Green, Thomas, 814, 992.  
 Greenberg, Harry, 484.  
 Greenfield, Franklin Co., Mass., 150, 639.  
 Greenland, 12.  
 Greenleaf, O. H., 540.  
 Gregory, Goody, 57, 612.  
 Gregory, Henry, 57, 58.  
 Grenowitz, Morris, 431, 485.  
 Greylock, an Indian chief, 618, 741.  
 Greystone, R. I., 706.  
 Griffin, Solomon, 540, 589.  
 Griffith, Mrs., 98.  
 Gristmills, see Mills, grain.  
 Griswold, Sylvanus, 778.  
 Grocers, 484, 489, 498, 549; also see Merchants.  
 Groups, racial, in Hampden County, 451-504.  
 Grout's Hill, 805, 927.  
 Gruendler, Elizabeth, Mrs., 461.  
 Guenther and Handel, 463.

- "Gulf, the," 993.  
 Gunpowder plot, 17.  
 Gustafson, Charles, 498.  
 Gymnasiums, 460, 464, 557, 561, 565, 637, 656, 660, 783, 847, 933.
- Haas, Ferdinand, 484.  
 Hadley, Hampshire Co., Mass., 3, 103, 104, 109, 110, 114, 116, 125, 128, 131, 138, 140-142, 144, 146, 147, 151-156, 158-160, 163, 165, 181, 183-189, 191, 216, 220, 231, 236, 249, 336, 588, 619, 625, 670, 737, 739, 746, 769, 854, 863, 917, 1026.  
 "Hadley Angel," 183, 188, 189.  
 Hadley Falls, 702.  
 Hadley Falls banks, 702, 718.  
 Hadley Falls Company, 670, 685, 722.  
 Hadley Falls Paper Company, 325.  
 Hadley, Isaac, 678.  
 Haile, H., 543.  
 Haldeman, John H., 759.  
 Hale, John, 864.  
 Hale, Rev., 892.  
 Hale, Silas, 844.  
 Halifax, N. S., 597.  
 Hall, Charles, 518.  
 Hall, Edward A., 473, 474.  
 Hall, Gordon, 984.  
 Hall, John, 489.  
 Hallock, Gerard, 320.  
 Halon, Steven, 502.  
 Hamilton Emery and Corundum Company, 836, 838.  
 Hamilton, Frank D., 838.  
 Hamilton, James, 829, 984.  
 Hamilton Memorial Library, 838.  
 Hamilton, Thomas, 854.  
 Hamilton, William, 447.  
 Hammond, William Churchill, 698, 699.  
 Hampden, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 685, 863-870, 930.  
 Hampden Academy, 869.  
 Hampden Agricultural Library, 577.  
 Hampden Coffee-house, 278, 279, 285, 297, 327, 362.  
 Hampden Cotton Manufacturing Company, 931.  
 Hampden County Bar Association, 435, 437.  
 Hampden County Colonization Society, 277.  
 Hampden County established, 3, 224, 435, 918, 989.  
 Hampden County Improvement League, 1016, 1017.  
 Hampden County Jail and House of Correction, 439-447, 478, 609.  
 Hampden County and John Hampden, 3-5.  
 Hampden County, map of, 4.  
 Hampden County, population, 3.  
 Hampden County racial Groups, 451-504.  
 Hampden County regional history, 615-1047.  
 Hampden County Training School, 783.  
 Hampden Emery Company, 836.  
 Hampden Fire Insurance Company, 521.  
 Hampden Guards, 278, 281.  
 Hampden Homœopathic Hospital, 563.  
 Hampden, John, 3, 5.  
 Hampden Mechanics' Association, 577.  
 Hampden Park, 324, 409, 603, 648, 651, 713.  
 "Hampden Patriot and Liberal Recorder," 291, 295, 465.  
 Hampden Plains, 754.  
 Hampden Ponds (Pequot Lakes), 754.  
 Hampden and the Scantic River, 863-870.  
 Hampden Town House, 157.  
 Hampshire County, Mass., 825, 828, 873, 978, 989, 1004.  
 Hampshire County established, 3, 103.  
 Hampshire County, pioneer life in 103-120.  
 "Hampton landing," 231.  
 Hancock, James, 922.  
 Hancock, John, 745.  
 Handel, partner of Guenther, 463.  
 "Hang-dog Swamp," 120.  
 Hannum family, 836.  
 Hanson, John, 498.  
 Hapgood, Asia, 511.  
 Harding, Chester, 332, 333, 569, 586.  
 Harding, James, 418.  
 Hare, Jonathan, 977.  
 Harkins, Monsignor, 719.  
 "Harland, Marion," 582.  
 Harness-making, 816.  
 Harpers Ferry, W. Va., 347, 360, 487, 591.  
 Harrington, "Tim," 711.  
 Harris, C. B., 702.  
 Harris, Daniel, 346, 586.  
 Harris, Henry, 648.  
 Harris, Jasper, 686.  
 Harris, William, 560.  
 Harrison, Hiram, 755.  
 Harrison, Roger, 984.  
 Harrison, William Henry, 285, 286, 638.  
 Hart, Luke, 474.  
 Hartford, Conn., 27, 28, 35, 38, 44, 49, 50, 56, 63, 66, 67, 70, 95-97, 108, 110, 114, 138, 141, 145, 146, 154, 165, 172, 179, 185, 221, 222, 224, 230-232, 248, 252, 268, 278, 279, 281, 287, 288, 292-294, 298, 299, 317-319, 321-323, 325, 330, 336, 374, 376, 394, 445, 454, 455, 519, 544, 568, 582, 625, 626, 632, 635, 669, 778, 780, 798, 811, 816, 817, 835, 879, 889, 1028.  
 Hartman, George, 516.  
 Harvard College and University, 90, 173, 179, 200, 268, 276, 329, 330, 333, 351,

- 409, 419, 420, 560, 561, 613, 637, 703,  
770, 772, 847, 865, 885, 999, 1002.  
Harvey, John, 790, 952-954.  
"Hasseky Marsh," or "Meadow," 28, 58,  
259, 264.  
Hastings, George, 530.  
Hat manufacture, 835, 896, 931, 936, 1039.  
Hatch, H. H., 537.  
Hatch lot, 578.  
Hatchet Harbor, 180.  
Hatfield, Hampshire Co., Mass., 114, 125,  
138, 140, 145, 149-151, 156-159, 163,  
173, 197, 205, 220, 332, 736, 738, 739,  
741, 742, 746, 854, 1002.  
Hatfield, William, 341, 342.  
Haughton, Indian interpreter, 25.  
Haverstraw, N. Y., 331.  
Hawaii, 341.  
Hawes-Hooper Bill, 440.  
Hawley, Franklin Co., Mass., 343.  
Hawley, Joseph, 232.  
Hayden, Merritt W., 443.  
Hayes, Colonel, 597.  
Hayes, William P., 458, 475.  
Hayes-Swazey collection, 589.  
Hayne., Robert Young, 324.  
Haynes, Lemuel, 857.  
Haynes, partner of Morse, 516.  
Haynes, Tilly, 541.  
Hazen, Allen, 532, 533, 537.  
Hazen, James, 869.  
Hazzard Pond, 968, 969.  
Heady, Wallace R., 447, xv.  
Healey, Patrick, 492, 656.  
Health Department Hospital, 563.  
Healy, Dennison Card, 798.  
Hebard, Storey, 413.  
Hebrews, see Jews.  
Hedstrom, Oscar, 498.  
Hemp, 77, 248.  
Henchman, Captain, 155.  
Hencking family, 462.  
Hencking, Gus, 463.  
Hendee, George M., 409, 525.  
Hendee Manufacturing Company, 493, 495,  
498.  
Hendricks, Reuben, 867.  
Henin, Charles, 485.  
Heresy of William Pynchon, 89-99.  
Hespeler, Ont., Canada, 704.  
Hessians, 744, 1006.  
Hiers family, 859.  
Higgins family, 640.  
Higher Brook, 910, 919.  
Highland, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 713.  
Highways, 10, 58, 59, 75, 109, 110, 224,  
259, 260, 292, 336, 356, 385, 397, 404,  
445, 462, 611, 657, 715, 734, 739, 757,  
778, 783, 791, 792, 796, 804, 806, 811,  
817, 826, 828, 839, 879, 909, 914, 918,  
921, 923, 927, 930, 945, 950, 952, 954,  
957, 958, 963, 967, 969, 975, 977, 1009,  
1025, 1029, 1032.  
Hill, E. A., 545.  
Hill, William Colver, 561.  
Hillcrest Park (cemetery), 569.  
"Hillers," and "Streeters," 287, 416.  
Hills, Luther, 845.  
Hills, Solomon, 845.  
Hinsdale, Harriet, 799.  
Hitchcock, Abner, 910.  
Hitchcock, David, 813.  
Hitchcock, Eaton, 815.  
Hitchcock, Edward, 10, 560.  
Hitchcock family, 813.  
Hitchcock Free High School, 815, 820.  
Hitchcock, John, 866, 911, 1024.  
Hitchcock, Luke, 855.  
Hitchcock, Nathaniel, 806, 863, 1024, 1028.  
Hitchcock, Noah, 811.  
Hitchcock, Peresh, 669.  
Hitchcock, Samuel A., 819, 820.  
Hoar, George Frisbie, 771.  
Hoar, Rockwood, 771.  
Hobbs, Josiah, 879.  
Hobson, Clifton H., 963.  
Hockanum, Holyoke, 124, 125, 689, 726,  
727.  
Hoffman's escape from jail, 442.  
Hofman, Paul, 463.  
Holcomb, Amasa, 978.  
Holland (in Europe), see Netherlands.  
Holland, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 803,  
873-879.  
Holland Inn, 878, 879.  
Holland, James, 830, 832, 833.  
Holland, Josiah Gilbert, 569, 581.  
Holland, population, 879.  
Holland Public Library, 877.  
Holland, settled by pioneer Blodgett, 873-  
879.  
Holland Social Library Company, 877.  
Holliday Hill Farm, 969.  
"Hollow," the, 401, 405.  
Holman, Mr., 721.  
Holmes, Wallace W., 441.  
Holy Family Institute Orphanage for  
Boys, 721.  
Holyoke, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 10, 143,  
188, 224, 235, 241, 344, 345, 387, 425,  
441, 455-457, 482, 493, 499, 500, 531,  
538, 544, 600, 604, 605, 607, 634, 636,  
637, 657, 664, 667-729, 770, 999, 1017,  
1024, xv.  
Holyoke, air view of, 672.  
Holyoke animals and plants, 695-698.  
Holyoke City Bank, 711, 718.  
Holyoke City Hall, 701, 718, 728.  
Holyoke City Hospital, 699, 700, 718.  
Holyoke, Elizur, 3, 57-60, 77, 89, 90, 97,  
98, 116, 129, 150, 151, 548, 685, 703, 733,  
779.



- Holyoke, Elizur, Mrs., see Pynchon, Mary.  
 Holyoke Envelope Company, 718.  
 Holyoke flora and fauna, 695-698.  
 Holyoke High School, 717.  
 Holyoke Home Information Center, 1017.  
 Holyoke incorporated as city, 701, 704.  
 Holyoke, John, 736.  
 Holyoke, Mrs., 617.  
 Holyoke Municipal Milk Station, 716.  
 Holyoke Museum of Natural History and Art, 692-695.  
 Holyoke, the paper city, 667-729.  
 Holyoke, population, 690, 701, 711, 712.  
 Holyoke, President, of Harvard, 560.  
 Holyoke Public Library, 691, 692.  
 Holyoke, Samuel, 150, 167.  
 Holyoke Semi-Centennial, 718.  
 Holyoke "Transcript," 702, 710, 711.  
 Holyoke "Transcript-Telegram," 718.  
 Holyoke Tuberculosis Hospital, 716.  
 Holyoke Vocational School, 716.  
 Holyoke Water Power Company, 692, 710-714, 718, 722-723, 725, 729.  
 Home for Aged Men, 409, 488, 491; also see Beaven-Kelly Home for Aged Men.  
 Home for Aged People, 936.  
 Home for the Friendless, 324.  
 Homes, beautiful, and Longmeadow, 883-904.  
 Hook farm, 461.  
 Hooker, John, 268, 1002.  
 Hooker, Rev., 378, 379.  
 Hooker, Thomas, 42, 43, 45.  
 Hoop Pole, Westfield, 747.  
 Hoosac River, 164.  
 Hopkins, Caleb, 416.  
 Hopkins, Edward, 55, 56, 67, 68, 733, 734.  
 Hopkins, Samuel, 1000, 1002.  
 Hopkinton, Middlesex Co., Mass., 788, 863.  
 Horse shows and racing, 332, 389, 390, 409, 648, 651, 752, 782, 783, 799, 898, 904, 968.  
 Horse whips, see Whip manufacture.  
 Horses, 24, 25, 27, 30, 38, 46, 56, 74, 75, 105, 109, 110, 114, 118, 119, 129-131, 142, 146, 154, 156, 158, 159, 160, 215, 220, 223, 234, 249-251, 253, 266, 267, 269, 276, 286, 291, 317, 318, 325, 328, 332, 333, 343, 390, 394, 403, 404, 407, 409, 477, 569, 630, 635, 645-648, 668, 670, 689, 690, 702, 706, 712, 735, 736, 740, 777, 778, 787, 791-793, 797-799, 804, 807, 809-811, 816, 817, 819, 821, 829, 832, 838, 844, 845, 848, 887, 895, 896, 898-900, 904, 916-918, 927, 931, 932, 938, 957, 959, 967, 968, 997, 998, 1002, 1006, 1011, 1016, 1028, 1032, 1039, 1044, 1046.  
 Horton, Timothy, 1001.  
 Hosford, William, 77.  
 Hospitals, 215, 389, 428, 438, 452, 561-564, 664, 699, 700, 705, 716, 743, 753, 755, 757, 924, 935.  
 Hotels, 362-365, 377, 461-463, 474, 519, 561, 598, 715, 716, 752, 900, 968, 971; also see Taverns.  
 Hough, Elizabeth, 976.  
 Houghton, Arthur, 820.  
 Housatonic Indians, 741.  
 "Housatunnock," 787.  
 House of Commons, British; see Parliament, British.  
 "House Meadow," 24.  
 "House of Mercy," see Mercy Hospital.  
 "House of Providence," hospital, 700, 719.  
 Houses of colonists, 24, 27-30, 36, 98, 118, 119, 230, 259, 333, 619, 620, 624, 734, 787, 788, 792, 793, 795, 809, 826, 950, 975, 1025.  
 Houston, Samuel, 320, 355.  
 How the people lived, 245-255.  
 Howard, Bezaleel, 207, 264, 275, 323, 333, 465, 1002.  
 Howard, J. N., 487.  
 Howells, William Dean, 654.  
 Howes, W. J., 714.  
 Hoyt, James A., 821.  
 Hubbard, Billy, 747.  
 Hubbard, Jonathan, 951.  
 Hubbard, Samuel, 57, 58.  
 Hudson River, 12, 156, 279, 326, 331.  
 Hughes, Alexander, 489.  
 Hughes, William, 488.  
 Hull, Albert, 984.  
 Hull, Hiram, 750.  
 Hungary, 345.  
 "Hungry Hill," 474.  
 Hunt, Ebenezer, 232.  
 Hunter, Mrs., 98, 548.  
 Hunting and fishing in Tolland, 983-985.  
 Huntington, Hampshire Co., Mass., 4, 421, 531, 754, 825, 833, 836, 838, 968.  
 Huntington, Frederick D., 769.  
 Huntington, Mr., selectman, 201.  
 Hurley, Joseph L., 611.  
 Husking bees, or frolics, 247, 810.  
 Huston, Robert, 793.  
 Hutchinson, Thomas, 182-184, 909.  
 Hutt, Frank Walcott, xv.  
 Hyde, Mary Knight, 820.  
 Hydroelectric plant, 536, 537.  
 Hynes, William J., 475.  
 Ice age, 11, 12, 14.  
 Iceland, 393.  
 Illinois, 355.  
 Illustrations, list of, xi-xiii.  
 Immigration laws, 496.  
 In field and forest, 229-241.  
 India, and cities of, 249, 417, 421, 511, 984; also see East Indies.  
 Indian Hill, 805.  
 Indian Leap, 147, 907, 922.  
 Indian Motorcycle Company, 498.  
 Indian Orchard, Hampden Co., Mass., 4,



- 147, 451-453, 455, 457, 488, 493, 526, 544, 580, 907.  
 Indian Rock, 1023.  
 Indian wars, 137-160; More Indian wars, 163-173; also see Wars.  
 Indiana, 355, 551, 568, 590.  
 Indians, American, 17, 21, 22, 24-28, 30, 31, 35-44, 47, 55-57, 59, 97, 98, 103, 105, 106, 108, 110, 113, 117-119, 123, 125-128, 131-134, 178, 180, 183-185, 187, 189, 196-198, 226, 231-233, 237, 238, 240, 246-248, 250, 253, 264, 265, 298, 306, 338, 355, 374, 425, 471, 548, 586, 587, 613, 617, 618, 623, 625, 636, 667, 668, 694, 733-735, 738, 741, 742, 757, 781, 792, 796, 803, 805, 806, 825, 831, 832, 853, 855, 870, 873, 874, 879, 884, 885, 889, 890, 892, 907, 927, 950, 961, 969, 975, 976, 983, 984, 997, 999, 1000, 1009, 1023, 1024, 1027; also see Agawam Indians; Congamuck Indians; Delaware Indians; Housatonic Indians; Macquas Indians; Mohawk Indians; Mohegan Indians; Money, early; Narragansett Indians; Natick Indians; Nipmuck Indians; Nonotuck Indians; Norwottuck Indians; Pawtucket Indians; Penobscot Indians; Pequot Indians; Pocumtuck Indians; Quabaug Indians; Stockbridge Indians; Wampanoag Indians; Winnebago Indians; Woronoco Indians.  
 Industrial Springfield, 507-526.  
 Ingersol, Mr., 198, 742.  
 Ingersoll, David, 825, 826.  
 Ingersoll, Edward, 334, 335.  
 Ingersoll, John, 334, 734.  
 "Ingleside" Catholic Orphanage, 721.  
 Ingleside Terrace, 712.  
 Inns and innkeepers, see Taverns.  
 Insects, 694; also see Bees.  
 Inshaw, Richard B., 635.  
 Institutions and education, 557-551.  
 Intemperance, see Liquor.  
 Interesting items, some, 373-381.  
 International Young Men's Christian Association Training School, 557.  
 Ionian Importing Company, 468.  
 Iowa, 355.  
 Ipswich, Essex Co., Mass., 92.  
 Ireland, and the Irish, 393-395, 469-475, 481, 619, 633, 640, 641, 653, 655, 664, 677, 681, 702, 715, 788, 790, 847, 854, 951, 952, 1042; also see Scotch-Irish.  
 Ireland Depot, Holyoke, 345, 685.  
 Ireland Parish, Holyoke, 619, 667, 670.  
 Iron manufacture, 633, 803, 806, 879, 931, 960; also see Blacksmiths.  
 Irvington-on-the-Hudson, N. Y., 524.  
 Isolation Hospital, Springfield, 563.  
 Italy, and Italians, 249, 330, 476-482, 504, 533, 550, 585, 590, 721, 848, 979.  
 Items, some interesting, 373-381.  
 Jackson, D. C. T., 836.  
 Jacobs house, 663.  
 Jacob's Ladder, 839.  
 Jahrling, Robert, 463.  
 Jails, 439-447, 478, 548, 609, 715, 889, 956; also see Prisons.  
 James, Gen., 315.  
 Janes family, 813.  
 Janes, Israel, 879.  
 Janetis, E., 466.  
 Janetis, Elias, 467.  
 Janser, Arnold, 464.  
 Janser, Emil, 464.  
 Japan, 329, 454, 584, 590, 694, 708.  
 Jasper Rand Art Museum, 755.  
 "Jedites," 261.  
 Jefferson, Thomas, 336.  
 "Jefferson's flood," 317.  
 Jenksville, Ludlow, 919-921.  
 Jennings, Captivity, 157.  
 Jennings, Stephen, 157.  
 Jennison, Isaac, 916.  
 Jensen, Franz G., 516, 517.  
 Jessup and Laflin Paper Company, 968.  
 Jeweler, 485.  
 Jewish burying-ground, 484.  
 Jews, 288, 431, 482-486, 496, 553.  
 Jitneys, 599.  
 "Johnny Appleseed," see Chapman, Jonathan.  
 Johnny Cake Hollow, 624.  
 Johns Hopkins University, 612.  
 Johnson, Abner, 937.  
 Johnson, Andrew, 316.  
 Johnson, Arbella, 20.  
 Johnson, Clifton, iii, v, vii.  
 Johnson family, 499.  
 Johnson, Goodman, 68.  
 Johnson, Grace P., 587.  
 Johnson, Isaac, 20.  
 Johnson, Samuel, 923.  
 Johnson, William, 752.  
 Johnson's Bookstore, 608.  
 Jokes, Joseph, 749.  
 Jones, Ebenezer, 624.  
 Jones farm, 713.  
 Jones, Frederic M., xv.  
 Jones, Griffith, 82, 83, 172.  
 Jones, William, 180, 223.  
 Josephs, A., 503.  
 Judd, Jonathan, 189.  
 Judd Paper Company, 717.  
 Judd, Sylvester, 187-192, 239.  
 Judd, W. E., 770.  
 Judd, William, 719.  
 Juniper Park, 756.  
 Justice and law, 435-447.  
 Kalmbach and Geisel, 462.  
 Kaminski, Alexander, 442-446.  
 Kaminski, John, 443, 444.  
 Kansas, 346.

- Kant, Immanuel, 561.  
 Karam, Peter, 502.  
 Karpovich, Peter, 496.  
 Kearney, Capt., 294.  
 Keating Wheel Company, 711.  
 Keep, Capt., 331.  
 Keep, Louisa E., Mrs., 753.  
 Keep, Mr., historian, 795.  
 Keep, Mr., selectman, 150.  
 Keller, Ethel F., Mrs., 962.  
 Kelley, Rev., 481.  
 Kellogg, P. P., 515.  
 Kelly, Jack, 513.  
 Kelly, Robert G., 428, 431.  
 Kennebec, Maine, 128, 165.  
 Kent, Captain, 214.  
 Kenworthy, John, 868.  
 Kerr, Walter, 613.  
 Keuleyan family, 453.  
 Kibbe Brothers Candy Company, 465, 477, 549.  
 Kibbe, Lorenzo, 1040.  
 Kibbe sandstone, 847.  
 "Kidd, Robert," 960, 961.  
 Kidd, William ("Captain"), 143, 144, 1040.  
 Kinder, John, 282.  
 Kindergartens, 514, 515, 559.  
 Kinderhook, N. Y., 158.  
 King, Albert, 472.  
 King, Asaph, 1034.  
 King, John, 950, 952.  
 King, John L., 487, 579, 586.  
 King, Raymond, 472.  
 King, Samuel, 928.  
 King, Thomas, 961.  
 King, Thomas E., 472, 473, 475.  
 King's Island, 44.  
 "King's Row," Palmer, 950, 951, 957.  
 Kingsburg, Julius, 485.  
 Kingsbury, Ebenezer, 865.  
 "Kingsfield," Palmer, 950.  
 Kingsley, D. P., 252.  
 Kingsley, Nathaniel, 829.  
 Kingston, N. H., 1044.  
 Kingston, N. Y., 446, 447.  
 Kingston, Paul J., 429.  
 "Kingstown," Palmer, 950, 954.  
 Kinney, Mrs., 878.  
 Kirkham, partner of Shaw, 516.  
 Kirkham, Ralph W., 419.  
 Kirkham and Parlett, 523.  
 Kirkland, John, 833.  
 Kirtland, Daniel, 200.  
 Kirtland place, 317.  
 Kitchener, Gen., 597.  
 Kneil, Sarah, 760.  
 Kniblow, Ebenezer, 954.  
 Knight, partner of Shredd, 517.  
 Knitting machines, 656, 664, 920, 1013, 1014.  
 Know Nothings, 303.  
 Knox, Alanson, 970.  
 Knox Automobile Company, 525.  
 Knox factory, 495.  
 Knox, Henry, 218, 224, 792.  
 Knox, Theodocia (Mrs. Utley), 799.  
 Kosak, Mr., 495.  
 Kossuth, Louis, 345.  
 Kowalczyk, Joseph, 493.  
 Kozak, Teddy, 694.  
 Krathofski executed, 441.  
 Labor organizations, see Societies, clubs, and organizations.  
 Ladd, Allan, 727.  
 La Farge, Bancel, 565.  
 Lafayette, General, 217, 746, 879.  
 Laflin, partner of Jessup, 968.  
 La Force family, 455.  
 La France, Louis, 712.  
 Lagoudakis, Charilaus, 467.  
 Lamb, Daniel, 234, 1024, 1025.  
 Lamb, Goodman, 168.  
 Lamb, Joshua, and Company, 951.  
 Lamb Knitting Machine Company, 1013, 1014.  
 Lamb Manufacturing Company, 656, 659.  
 Lancaster, Worcester Co., Mass., 138, 141, 825, 826, 949.  
 Lane, John S., and Son, 757.  
 Lane, Lizzie, 539.  
 Lang, Florence Rand, Mrs., 755.  
 Langdon, John, 1035.  
 Langdon, Lewis, 863, 868, 1038.  
 Langdon, Paul, 845, 863, 1028.  
 Lange family, 462.  
 Lange, Herman, 463.  
 Langton, George, 80, 83.  
 Langton, Hannah, Mrs., 83.  
 La Pierre, Mr., 455.  
 La Riviere, Octave, 457.  
 Lasek, Aloysius, 494.  
 Lasker, Henry, 483, 485.  
 Lasker, Louis, 483.  
 Lathrop, Joseph, 206, 275, 747, 1002, 1003, 1006-1008, 1010.  
 Lathrop, Samuel, 278.  
 Lathrop, Seth, 1001.  
 Lathrop, "Squire," 1010.  
 Laurel Park, above Northampton, 1035.  
 La Valley, J. J., 945.  
 Law, Jessie M., 561.  
 Law and justice, 435-447.  
 Lawrence, James, 992.  
 Lawrence, Miss, 468.  
 Lawton, Christopher Jacob, 787, 788.  
 Lawyers, 311-313, 485, 494, 503, 510, 517, 636-653, 712, 733, 746, 769, 770, 772, 787, 970, 1019.  
 Lead manufacturing, 931.  
 Leader, William, 469.  
 Leather manufacture, see Tanning and tanneries.  
 Lebanon Springs, N. Y., 252.

- Lee, Berkshire Co., Mass., 796.  
 Lee, Colonel, 278.  
 Lee, Henry S., 519.  
 Lee, Jesse, 916.  
 Lee, Robert Edward, 489.  
 Lee, Roswell, 225, 335, 567, 568.  
 Lee, Walter, 106, 734.  
 Le Fevre, Mr., builder, 458.  
 Legislature, Massachusetts, 204, 222, 223, 326, 512, 531, 625, 636, 658, 659, 673, 684, 714, 787, 790, 792, 843, 866, 869, 890, 923, 932, 933, 983, 984, 1009; also see Court, General.  
 Lenz, Frank, 660.  
 Leominster, Worcester Co., Mass., 351.  
 Leonard, Abel, 777.  
 Leonard, Harriet, Mrs., 782.  
 Leonard, John, 58, 105.  
 Leonard, John E., 612.  
 Leonard, Moses, 778.  
 Leonard, Nathan, 829.  
 Leonard, Reuben, 778.  
 Leonard, Samuel, 782.  
 Leonard's Tavern, 778.  
 Le Pierre, Attorney, 458.  
 Lever, Asbury Francis, 1017.  
 Le Verdiere, Augustine, 459.  
 Leverett, John, 164, 184.  
 Levine, Hillel, 485.  
 Lewis, Mary, Mrs. (Mrs. Hugh Parsons), 65, 66, 81-85.  
 Lewis, Mr., 65.  
 Lexington, Middlesex Co., Mass., 214, 855, 873, 955, 1006, 1034.  
 Leyden, Edward J., 429.  
 Liberty Hill, 856, 859.  
 Libraries, 146, 294, 316, 324, 360, 364, 469, 518, 565, 568, 590, 632, 657, 658, 664, 691, 692, 754, 820, 838, 877, 891, 900, 901, 933, 934, 936, 1001, 1010, 1016, 1041.  
 Libraries and museums, 575-591.  
 Lighting, 76, 542, 543, 609, 623, 628, 634, 659, 713, 715, 827, 1012-1015, 1031.  
 Lilley, William, 877.  
 Lincoln, Abraham, 304, 311, 316, 472, 513, 612, 613, 635, 767, 859.  
 Lincoln, Benjamin, 218-220.  
 Lincoln, Eliza F. M., Mrs., 820.  
 Lincoln, James D., 820.  
 Lind, Jenny (Mrs. Otto Goldschmidt), 344, 565, 589.  
 Lindbergh, Charles Augustus, 565.  
 Lindsay, John, 1044.  
 Linen manufacture, 248, 252, 589, 620, 628, 921, 951, 960, 1039.  
 Lions, 648, 649, 742.  
 Liquor, and intemperance, 112-114, 133, 166, 168, 169, 172, 173, 190, 191, 199, 218, 234, 250, 267, 268, 275, 277, 278, 283, 295, 297, 307, 325, 328, 335, 339, 343, 373, 391, 408, 462, 499, 500, 513, 547, 633, 641, 663, 668, 669, 679, 690, 735, 742, 779, 783, 791, 792, 807, 809, 810, 814, 815, 829, 830, 845, 875, 889, 895, 897, 912, 916, 920, 921, 927, 939, 1003, 1011, 1039, 1044, 1046; also see Breweries; Distilleries; Temperance movement.  
 "Lisbon" (Longmeadow), 883.  
 Liswell Hill, 783.  
 Lithography, 462, 513, 514.  
 "Little Italy," in Springfield, 476, 478, 479.  
 Little River, 481, 531-533, 535-537, 540, 736, 740, 747, 757, 793, 798, 969.  
 Little Tekoa, 970.  
 Littleville, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 834.  
 Livery business, 332, 538, 752, 1011.  
 Livingston, Robert, 166.  
 Lloyd, William, 590.  
 Lobdell, Simon, 128, 179.  
 Lochridge, Elbert Emerson, 536, 537.  
 Lockwood, John H., 767.  
 Locomotive manufacture, 509-511, 513.  
 Lodges, fraternal; see Societies, clubs, and organizations.  
 Loftus, Joseph, 706.  
 Lombard, Daniel, 264, 335, 336.  
 Lombard, Mr., 264, 267.  
 Long, Charles L., 447.  
 Long, Dr., 688.  
 Long Hill, 31, 98, 138, 145, 146, 264, 816, 818, 819, 883.  
 Long Island, N. Y., 11, 36.  
 Long Island Sound, 9, 12, 154, 279, 721.  
 Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, 287, 393, 591.  
 Longfellow, Samuel, 591.  
 Longmeadow, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 25, 63, 83, 109, 130, 140, 145, 150, 171, 205, 218, 219, 259, 275, 331, 336, 339, 351, 378, 512, 565, 567, 782, 843, 844, 847, 863, 883-904, 907, 917, 936, 1025, 1026.  
 Longmeadow Centennial, 900.  
 Longmeadow Historical Society, 901.  
 Longmeadow Lyceum, 891.  
 Longmeadow Museum, 901.  
 Longmeadow, population, 904.  
 Longmeadow, with its beautiful homes, 883-904.  
 Loomis Aerial Telegraph Company, Inc., 1011.  
 Loomis, Amos, 976.  
 Loomis boy captured, 741.  
 Loomis, Mahlon, 1011.  
 Loomis, W. S., 692, 702, 703, 710.  
 Loring, William L., 283.  
 "Lost Dauphin," 892.  
 Lost Lake, 879.



- Lothrop, Captain, 144, 145.  
 Lotteries, 198, 223, 275, 276, 625, 780, 792, 1008, 1023.  
 Louisburg, Nova Scotia, 667.  
 Louisiana, 303, 858.  
 Louisville, Ky., 355.  
 "Love and Unity Tree," 969.  
 Low, Will Hicok, 565.  
 Lowell, Middlesex Co., Mass., 314, 396, 557, 633.  
 Loyalists or Tories, 182, 213, 263, 743, 745, 828, 887, 929.  
 Lozier Manufacturing Company, 753.  
 Lubold family, 462.  
 Lucas, Heman S., 836.  
 Lucas Museum, 838.  
 Ludington, Martha, Mrs., 1010.  
 Ludlow, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 64, 171, 199, 219, 325, 456, 531, 540, 907-924, 949, 1031.  
 Ludlow Centennial, 922.  
 Ludlow City, Ludlow, 914, 919, 920.  
 Ludlow, Edmund, 910.  
 Ludlow Glass Works, 919.  
 Ludlow Manufacturing Associates, 924, 1042.  
 Ludlow Manufacturing Company, 921.  
 Ludlow Mills, 907.  
 Ludlow Mills Company, 921.  
 Ludlow, Minnechaug or Berryland, 907-924.  
 Ludlow 150th Anniversary, 924.  
 Ludlow, population, 908, 924.  
 Ludlow Reservoir, 531, 532.  
 Ludlow, Roger, 910.  
 Lumbard family, 813.  
 "Lumber Road," 230.  
 Lumbering, and lumber trade, 229-231, 278, 279, 718, 821, 919, 920, 951, 968, 984, 993, 1016.  
 Lutz, Elder, 405.  
 Lutz, Jacob, 462.  
 Lyman, Elias, 231.  
 Lyman, Gideon, 198.  
 Lyman, Mary (Mrs. Robert Emery), 331.  
 Lyman mills, 682, 718.  
 Lyman, Mr., 519.  
 Lyman, Stephen, 826.  
 Lyman, Timothy, 826, 834.  
 Lyman, William, 826.  
 Lynch, Charles F., xv.  
 Lynch, J. T., 701.  
 Lynn, Essex Co., Mass., 392, 468, 1044.  
 Lyon, Gad, 913.  
 Lyon, Horatio, 934.  
  
 McCall, Samuel Walker, 758.  
 McCarthy, Thomas, 662.  
 McCarthy's Hill, 14, 843.  
 McClean, Alexander, 915.  
 McClellan, Capt., 641.  
 McClellan, William, 641, 642.  
  
 McClenathan, William, 790.  
 McClench, Mayor, 636.  
 McClench, William Wallace, 646, 770.  
 McCloskey, Cardinal, 472.  
 McCormick, John B., 701.  
 McDonald, Henry, 475.  
 McKinstry, Eliza, 622.  
 McKinstry, John, 622, 623, 626, 632.  
 McKnight, J. D., 541.  
 McLean, Dr., 454, 455.  
 McManigal, Ortie, 551, 552.  
 McNeil, Rev., 790.  
  
 Macaulay, Thomas Babington, vii.  
 MacAuslan and Wakelin Company, 715.  
 MacDonnell, John, 702, xv.  
 MacDuffie School for Girls, 560.  
 MacDuffie, Walter V., 561.  
 Machine manufacture, 753, 920, 960, 1012, 1016; also see Agricultural machinery.  
 Mack, Willard, 446.  
 Mackintosh, C. E., 714.  
 Macquas Indians, 170.  
 "Madagascar," 735.  
 Madison County, N. Y., 332.  
 Madison, James, 333, 915.  
 Madison, William, 169.  
 Magna Charta Island, 95.  
 Magna, Russell W., Mrs., 719.  
 Magore, Lorna, 611.  
 Mail, United States, 292, 293, 315, 325, 368, 474, 509, 515, 630, 668, 797, 798, 811, 816, 918, 958, 1039; also see Post offices.  
 Maine, 165, 197, 771, 830, 832, 1014, 1018.  
 Mallifield, John, 196, 569.  
 Mallory, Mrs., 468.  
 Malloy, Capt., 473.  
 Malone, John J., 429.  
 Malta (island), 413.  
 Manchester, Conn., 445, 446.  
 Manchester Grounds, 684, 692.  
 Manchester, John, 984.  
 Manila, Selig, 484.  
 Mann, Horace, 558.  
 Manning, David, 444, 606, 609.  
 Manopolous, Christos, 468.  
 Mansfield, Frederick, 611.  
 Mansfield, Miss, 403.  
 Manufactures, early varied, of Wales. 989-993.  
 Map of Hampden County, 4.  
 Maple sugar making, 402, 792, 984, 1000.  
 Marble, Joel, 222.  
 "Marco Paul's Adventures," 374-377.  
 Marcy, Oliver, 1041.  
 Marie Antoinette, 892.  
 Marietta, Ohio, 353, 354.  
 Markarian, B. H., 451, 452.  
 Marks for cattle, horses, swine, 56, 114.  
 Marlborough, Middlesex Co., Mass., 141, 736.



- Marriages, 21, 26, 59, 60, 65, 66, 199, 204, 208, 213, 272, 295, 301, 319, 327, 331, 332, 334, 336, 344, 351, 362, 365, 484, 584, 617, 655, 737, 741, 742, 772, 808, 832, 858, 873, 885, 1002.  
 Marshall, Charles, 984.  
 Marshall, Pierce, 984.  
 Marshfield, Mrs., 81.  
 Marshfield, Samuel, 133, 779.  
 Martens, Henry, 611.  
 Martha's Dingle, 271, 568.  
 Martha's Vineyard, 407.  
 Martin, Michael, 295.  
 Martinelli, Cardinal, 481.  
 Marvellum Paper Company, 718.  
 Maryland, 171, 486.  
 Mason, Henry, 488.  
 Mason, John, 38-43, 50, 51, 67.  
 Mason, Primus, 408, 488.  
 Masonic Building, Springfield, 396.  
 Masons and stonecutters, 493, 497, 498, 896, 1006; also see Builders.  
 Massachusetts Agricultural College, 688.  
 Massachusetts Arms Company, 656.  
 Massachusetts Bay, 21, 23-25, 27, 30, 37, 44, 46, 55, 56, 61, 69, 85, 93, 95, 96, 110, 169, 178, 201, 736, 787, 788, 812, 909, 997, 1023, 1025.  
 Massachusetts Bay Company, 18, 19, 22, 24.  
 "Massachusetts Gazette and General Advertiser," 291.  
 Massachusetts General Court; see Court, General, Massachusetts.  
 Massachusetts Hospital for Epileptics, 935.  
 Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company, 489, 502, 519, 522, 523, 646.  
 Massasoit Fire Insurance Company, 521.  
 Massasoit House, 363-365, 519.  
 Massasoit, Indian, 137, 362.  
 Massasoit Lake, 557.  
 Massasoit Spring, 1009, 1010.  
 Matches, manufacture of, 599, 632.  
 Mater Dolorosa School, 694.  
 Mather, Atherton, 983.  
 Mather, Cotton, 81.  
 Mather, Increase, 144, 155, 159, 189.  
 Mather, Samuel, 755.  
 "Mather on Congregational principles," 621.  
 Mathews, or Matthews, John, 74, 107, 147.  
 Matthews, Sarah, Mrs., 454.  
 Maumee River, 356.  
 Maxfield, Major, 429.  
 Maxim, Hiram Stevens, 1014.  
 May, Nehemiah, 875.  
 Maynard, Elisha Burr, 549.  
 Mayor of Springfield (Fordis C. Parker), boyhood memories of, 401-409.  
 "Meadow City," 714.  
 Meat Markets, 484, 701.  
 Medeski, Anthony, 494.  
 Medical profession:  
   Advertisements of medicine, 294, 296.  
   "Cabot fever," 634.  
   Calentura, 428.  
   Camp fever, 856.  
   Cholera, 682, 984.  
   Dentists, 485, 517, 705.  
   Diseases, contagious, 956.  
   Dissection, surgical, 390.  
   Doctors, see Physicians, below.  
   Doctor's services less important than religion, 267.  
   Druggists, 221, 222, 297, 343.  
   Epidemics, 74, 595, 627, 682, 878.  
   Epilepsy, 935.  
   Faith healing, 663.  
   Farr Alpaca Company's physician, 705.  
   Gout, 650.  
   Herbs and roots, medical, 250, 993.  
   Hessian physician, 1006.  
   Hospitals, 215, 389, 428, 438, 452, 561-564, 664, 699, 700, 705, 716, 743, 753, 755, 757, 924, 935.  
   Influenza epidemic, 595.  
   Itch, 956.  
   Malaria, 475.  
   Malarial fever, Cuban, 428.  
   Medicine, study of, 329.  
   Medicine needed, 148.  
   Peppermint distillery, 779.  
   Physicians; see Bowen, Henry C.; Brewer, Chauncey; Brigham, Fred; Carmichael, J. H.; Chadwick, Henry; Champagne, Eugene (faith healer); Chapin, W. A. R.; Clark, David; Deane, Wallace H.; De Wolf, Thaddeus K.; Fagnent, Dr.; Fitzgerald, Edward; Ghourayeb, Albert; Green, Thomas; Henin, Charles; Horton, Timothy; Karpovich, Peter; Lathrop, Seth; Lawrence, James; Leonard, John E.; Long, Dr.; Lucas, Heman S.; McLean, Dr.; Otis, Dr.; Paul, Socrates J.; Pynchon, Charles; Sherman, John; Skeelee, Amos; Spelios, L. G.; Van Horn, John; Wallis, Thomas; Whitney, Dr.; Ziter, Fred.  
   Prescription, an old, 626.  
   Roots and herbs, medical, 250, 993.  
   Self healing, 700.  
   Smallpox, 215, 265, 277, 742, 743, 795, 833, 834, 856, 878, 883, 930, 991.  
   Snakes as medicine, 241.  
   Spotted fever, 856.  
   Superstitions, medical, 377, 380.  
   Surgery of Indians, 694.  
   Surgical bandages, 304, 664.  
   Town pump a "physician," 373.  
   Tuberculosis, 512.  
   Tufts Medical College, 467.  
   Typhoid fever, 634.

- Typhus epidemic, 627.  
 Vapor baths, 688.  
 Meekins, Emory, 518, 519, 608.  
 Meekins, Packard and Wheat, 518, 519, 608.  
 Meetinghouses, 45, 46, 61, 62, 74, 77, 142, 150, 158, 167, 168, 183, 184, 189, 195, 199, 206, 208, 209, 260-262, 267-269, 277, 278, 284, 299, 356, 373, 621, 622, 624, 626, 736, 740, 741, 743, 747, 778, 780, 789, 806-808, 811, 827, 834, 835, 845, 855, 857, 864, 865, 868, 869, 873, 874, 876, 884-888, 891, 893, 896, 897, 900, 910-912, 914, 916, 930, 952, 953, 955, 957-959, 968, 976, 977, 979, 985, 990, 991, 998, 1001, 1003, 1011, 1019, 1025, 1027-1029, 1033, 1035, 1036; also see Churches.  
 Mellichamp, Jean, 196.  
 Memorial Bridge, 600-604, 609, 904.  
 Memories, boyhood, of a Springfield mayor (Fordis C. Parker), 401-409.  
 Memories of Springfield, 259-272.  
 Memphremagog, Lake, 278.  
 Menamesick (Chicopee River), 949.  
 Meneely, Mr., of E. A., and G. R., Meneely, 552.  
 Merchants, general, 171, 172, 221, 248, 267, 296, 314, 329, 330, 334, 336, 516, 668, 684, 835, 836, 888.  
 Mercy Hospital, Springfield, 428, 562, 563.  
 Merriam, Charles, 336, 337, 364, 373, 391, 581, 630.  
 Merriam, Dan, 336.  
 Merriam, Ebenezer, 336, 337.  
 Merriam, G. and C., 337, 373, 581, 630.  
 Merriam, George, 336, 337, 341, 346, 364, 373, 391, 581, 630.  
 Merriam, George Spring, 581.  
 Merriam, Homer, 337.  
 Merriam, Thirza, Mrs., 336.  
 Merrick, Aaron, 957, 958.  
 Merrick, Capt., 929.  
 Merrick, Constable, 84.  
 Merrick family, 1009; also see Mirrick.  
 Merrick, Goodwife, 85.  
 Merrick, James, 927.  
 Merrick, Thomas, 864, 1024.  
 Merrick, Tilly, 1005.  
 Merrick and Fay, 931.  
 Merrimac River, 18, 197.  
 Merritt, partner of Wood, 921.  
 Metcalf, Joseph, 704, 705.  
 Metelli, Eugene, 480.  
 Mexico, 320, 596, 716.  
 Michael, Rev., 503.  
 Michalaros, John, 467, 468.  
 Michigan, 334, 355, 416.  
 Middle Branch, 828, 834, 835.  
 Middle Granville, Hampden Co., Mass., 856, 857.  
 Middle Landing, Springfield, 269.  
 Middleborough, Plymouth Co., Mass., 1019.  
 Middlebury, Vt., 1011.  
 Middlefield, Hampshire Co., Mass., 825, 830, 833, 839.  
 Middlesex County, Mass., 97, 198.  
 Middletown, Conn., 293, 446, 711.  
 Milford, 865.  
 Milford, Conn., 180, 181.  
 Military training, 47, 62, 97, 98, 128-132, 149, 170, 195, 196, 222, 224, 260, 277, 278, 280, 281, 568, 643, 741, 743, 754, 791, 811, 814, 827, 917, 929, 955, 956, 977, 992, 1007.  
 Milk marketing, 716, 1041.  
 Mill Brook, 989, 993.  
 Mill River, 58, 76, 90, 138, 146, 147, 172, 284, 288, 365, 378, 386, 706, 843, 922.  
 Miller, Aaron, 923.  
 Miller Corner, Ludlow, 909, 914.  
 Miller, Jean, Mrs., 98, 548.  
 Miller, John, 667.  
 Miller, Joseph, 908, 911, 916.  
 Miller, Thomas, 83, 84, 104, 146, 147, 779.  
 Miller's River, 172.  
 Mills, grain, or grist, 97, 98, 110, 114, 145, 147-149, 160, 275, 283, 324, 401, 619, 668, 670, 737, 779, 793, 828, 834, 868, 875, 890, 896, 908, 930, 952, 959, 978, 989, 1006, 1038, 1041.  
 Mills, lumber; see Sawmills.  
 Milnor, William, 293.  
 Milton, David, 3.  
 Mineachogue, see Minnechaug.  
 Minerals, 171, 172, 794, 799, 803, 836, 838, 839, 873, 879, 945.  
 Ministers (pastors, preachers):  
   Builder of churches, 458.  
   Entertained at each other's houses, 106.  
   First in county, 35.  
   Guilty of drunkenness, 954.  
   Had many chance guests, 894.  
   Hampshire Association, 952.  
   None at Springfield first year, 31.  
   Residences, 36.  
   Respect shown for, 269.  
   Smokers, 254.  
   Treated to rum, 267.  
   Visited schools, 270.  
 Ministers, list of; see:  
   Adams, Mr.; Ahlquist, L. P.; Atwater, Noah; Atwell, George; Bailey, Winthrop; Ballantine, John; Barnes, Stephen G.; Bascom, Aaron; Beaven, Thomas D.; Bisbee, John; Black, Newton; Blinkensop, William; Boyd, William; Breck, Robert; Brewer, Daniel; Brown, Ebenezer; Burns, Rev.; Butler, Daniel; Caldwell, John; Callender, Elisha; Chapin, Pelatiah; Clap, Thomas; Clark, Eli B.; Clark, Lucius W.; Coddington, Elijah; Colton, Abishai; Colton, Calvin;

- Conaty, Rev.; Conklin, Robert; Cooley, Timothy; Mather; Davenport, John; Davies, Thomas F.; Davis, Emerson; Davis, Rev.; DeBerry, William N.; Dellaporta, Anthony; Dickinson, Baxter; Doherty, John J.; Dwight, Timothy; Earle, Rev.; Eddy, Mary Baker (Glover); Edwards, Jonathan; Eliot, John; Ely, Alfred; Ely, Samuel; Fisk, Elisha; Fisk, Franklin; Fisk, Wilbur; Fitch, James; Fitton, James; Foster, Isaac; Forward, Abel; Franzen, Johannes; Gagnier, Louis G.; Galligher, M. P.; Garnier, L. G.; Gilkey, James Gordon; Glover, Pelatiah; Griswold, Sylvanus; Hale, Rev.; Hall, Gordon; Harkins, Monsignor; Harrison, Roger; Harvey, John; Hazen, James; Healey, Patrick; Holyoke, John; Hooker, John; Hooker, Rev.; Hooker, Thomas; Hopkins, Samuel; Hosford, William; Howard, Bezaleel; Hubbard, Billy; Hubbard, Jonathan; Jennison, Isaac; Kelley, Rev.; Kingsbury, Ebenezer; Kniblow, Ebenezer; Lathrop, Joseph; Lee, Jesse; Le Verdiere, Augustine; Lockwood, John H.; Lutz, Elder; McClean, Alexander; McClenathan, William; McCloskey, Cardinal; McKinstry, John; McNeil, Rev.; Manopoulous, Christos; Martinelli, Cardinal; Mather, Cotton; Mather, Increase; Michael, Rev.; Mirick, Noah; Moody, Dwight Lyman; Morley, Sardis; Morton, James; Moulton, Ebenezer; Moulton, Horace; Moxon, George; Nettleton, Asahel; Niles, Elder; Noble, Seth; O'Callaghan, John; Occum, Sampson; Olsen, Augustus; O'Reilly, P. T.; Osgood, Samuel; Pappaleonidas, D.; Peabody, William B. O.; Peck, Phineas; Pope Pius IX; Rapaport, Samuel; Reardon, G. T.; Reccord, Augustus P.; Reed, David Allen; Reeve, Ezra; Rice, William; Russell, John; Ruter, Martin; Saab, Paul A.; Sabin, Abishai; Sanderson, Alonzo; Sankey, Ira David; Sargent, Horatio; Sheldon, David; Steward, Antipas; Stiles, Ezra; Stocking, Amasa; Stone, Samuel; Storrs, Richard Salter; Strong, Simeon; Taylor, Edward; Terhune, Edward Payson; Thompson, Lathrop; Thompson, William; Thrasher, Rev.; Tomikowski, Joseph; Treat, Richard; Turcotte, Magloire; Tuttle, Moses; Ufford, Edward Smith; Upham, Edward; Vickberg, Rev.; Walker, J. B. R.; Warren, Moses; Warren, Rev.; Wesley, John; White, Moses; Whitefield, George; Wightman, Jesse; Wilcox, George; Williams, Bishop; Williams, John; Williams, Rev.; Williams, Roger; Williams, Stephen; Winchester, Elhanan; Woodbridge, John.
- Minnechaug or Berryland (Ludlow), 907-924, 1031.
- Mirick, David, 1026.
- Mirick, Lieut., 1029.
- Mirick, Noah, 909, 1026-1028, 1033, 1035.
- Mirick, Samuel, 778.
- Mirick, Timothy, 1029, 1030.
- Mirrick, Goodman, 169.
- Mirrick, Thomas, 49, 58, 105, 172, 777.
- Mirrick, also see Merrick.
- Missouri, 355, 418.
- Misulis, Kazimir, 493.
- Mittineague, Hampden Co., Mass., 10, 431, 780, 782, 847, 970, 1009, 1011.
- Mittineague Paper Company, 970, 1012.
- Mixer, Isaac, 829.
- Mixer, Phineas, 956.
- Mohawk Indians, 165, 166.
- Mohegan Indians, 154, 805.
- Monadnock Mountain, 873.
- Money, early, 36-43, 74, 106, 125, 548, 883.
- Money Hole Hill, 669, 670.
- Monroe, James, 333.
- Monson, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 14, 286, 331, 435, 567, 589, 803, 805, 816, 863, 869, 927-940, 958, 991.
- Monson Academy, 324, 336, 454, 932, 934.
- Monson and its early woolen mills, 927-940.
- Monson Free Public Library, 934.
- Monson, population, 928.
- Monson, William, 928.
- Monson Woolen Manufacturing Company, 931.
- Monson and Brimfield Manufacturing Company, 930.
- Montague, Franklin Co., Mass., 230, 233.
- Montague, John, 236.
- Montague, Richard, 160.
- Montauk Point, N. Y., 430.
- Montgomery, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 825, 943-945, 967.
- Montgomery among the hills, 943-945.
- Montgomery, population, 945.
- Montgomery, Richard, 943.
- Montreal, Canada, 456, 458.
- Moodus, Conn., 924.
- Moody, Dwight Lyman, 335, 405, 538, 637.
- Moody, Levi, 238.
- Moore, Deacon, 154.
- Moore Drop Forging Company, 609.
- Moore, George A., 963.
- Moore, Joel, 943.
- Moore, Mr., 977.
- Moore, Mrs., 293.
- Moose, 237, 239.
- Moose Meadow, 943.
- Moran, James, 935.
- More Indian wars, 163-173.



- Morgan, David, 806.  
 Morgan, Elisha, 515.  
 Morgan Envelope Company, 477, 515.  
 Morgan, Joseph, 668.  
 Morgan, Justin, 390, 1011.  
 Morgan, Lucas, 668.  
 Morgan, Miles, 74, 75, 78, 84, 169, 172, 515, 547.  
 Morgan, Sergeant, 168.  
 Morgan, Thomas, 815.  
 Morgan (Way) house, 765.  
 Moriarty, Maude Tait, 599.  
 Morley, Sardis, 415.  
 Morris, Henry, 1029.  
 Morris, O. B., 465.  
 Morris, Oliver, 337, 338.  
 Morris, Robert O., 544.  
 Morse, Jacob, 590.  
 Morse, Jedidiah, 630.  
 Morse, O. D., 516.  
 Morse and Haynes, 516.  
 Morton, James, 796.  
 Moseley, Colonel, 778.  
 Moseley, David, 744.  
 Moseley, John, 743.  
 Mosely, Captain, 148, 149.  
 Moses, Horace A., 565, 969, 970, 1012, 1016, xv.  
 Mosher Building, 711.  
 Mosman, Silas, 635.  
 Mother of Springfield plantation, Agawam, 777-784.  
 Motorcycles, 409, 525, 526.  
 Moulton, Ebenezer, 990.  
 Moulton family, 989.  
 Moulton, Freeborn, 929, 930.  
 Moulton, Horace, 934, 991.  
 Moulton, Molly (Mrs. Anthony Needham), 989.  
 Moulton, Samuel, 991.  
 "Mount Asaph" (Chester), 828.  
 Mount Desert, Maine, 21.  
 Mount Dumplin, 961.  
 Mount Grandy, 993.  
 Mount Hitchcock, 993.  
 Mount Holyoke, 10, 109, 587, 685, 689, 690, 1028.  
 Mount Holyoke College, 452, 477, 561, 698, 699.  
 Mount Hope, 137, 140, 151.  
 Mount Marcy, 1041.  
 Mount Monadnock, 873.  
 "Mount Orthodox," 1003.  
 Mount Pisgah, 783, 993.  
 Mount Provin, 533, 536, 783, 979.  
 Mount St. Vincent Orphanage for Girls, 721.  
 Mount Shatterack, 944, 945.  
 Mount Sodom, 856, 979.  
 Mount Tekoa, 240, 735, 749, 943, 945, 969; also see Little Tekoa, 970.  
 Mount Tom, 4, 10, 12, 110, 239, 240, 544, 587, 669, 703, 714, 718, 1028.  
 Mount Tom Aqueduct Company, 684.  
 Mount Vision, 869.  
 Mount Warner, 993.  
 Mount Washington, 11.  
 Mountain Park, Holyoke, 702-704.  
 Mountain View Farm, 945.  
 Mountains, geology of, 9-14.  
 "Mountains," the, Wilbraham, 1023, 1026.  
 "Mountfair" (Chester), 828.  
 Moxon, George, 35, 39, 40, 49, 58, 59, 61-63, 74, 77, 82, 89, 90, 92, 95.  
 Moxon, James, 576.  
 Moxon, Martha, 35, 78, 81.  
 Moxon, Rebeckah, 35, 78, 81.  
 Muddy Brook, 145.  
 Mundale, Hampden Co., Mass., 533, 535, 749, 757.  
 Munger family, 989.  
 Munger, Rebecca (Mrs. Anthony Needham), 989.  
 Municipal Springfield, 529-553.  
 Munn, Benjamin, 108, 929, 930.  
 Munn, Charles Clark, 582.  
 Munroe Company, 960.  
 Murders, 403, 438, 442-446, 686, 782.  
 Murphy, Francis, 405.  
 Murray, Arthur T., 525.  
 Murray, John, 825, 827, 828.  
 Murray, partner of Smith, 516.  
 Murrayfield (Chester), 795, 825, 828, 830, 833, 834.  
 Museum of Fine Arts, 575, 590, 613.  
 Museum of Natural History, 575, 586, 587.  
 Museums, 405, 451, 613, 755, 838, 870, 899, 901, 934.  
 Museums and libraries, 575-591.  
 Music and musical instruments, 266, 313, 319, 331, 332, 405, 435, 441, 460, 461, 463, 464, 477, 479-482, 514, 538, 548, 550-553, 560, 565, 582, 583, 591, 622, 624, 626, 629, 631, 632, 641, 698, 699, 702, 718, 740, 743, 752, 761, 779, 798, 808, 814, 876, 885, 887, 888, 894, 896, 899, 900, 913, 915, 918, 934, 944, 953, 957, 958, 999, 1003, 1008, 1011, 1033, 1039, 1040; also see Theatres and opera; Bells.  
 Muskrats, 238, 239, 282, 692, 1023.  
 Myrfield (Rowe, Franklin Co., Mass.), 828.  
 Naismith, James, 557.  
 Namerick Brook, 109.  
 Nantucket County, Mass., 324, 934, 935.  
 Narragansett Indians, 151.  
 Narragansett, R. I., 139, 140.  
 Nash, Deacon, 911.  
 Nash, Timothy, 160.  
 Nash, William, 701.



- "Nashaway Trail," 949.  
 Natick Indians, 142.  
 National Blank Book Company, 718.  
 National Dairy Show, 1017, 1018.  
 National Equipment Company, 499.  
 National Library Bindery Company, 1016.  
 National Net and Twine Company, 924.  
 National Recovery Administration (NRA), 600.  
 "National Union" magazine, 467.  
 "Nautilus Magazine," 700.  
 Navy, United States, 316, 327, 328, 419, 425, 978.  
 Nayasset (Springfield), 31.  
 Needham, Anthony, 989, 990.  
 Needham, partner of Osborn, 903.  
 Negro, John, 741.  
 Negroes, 131, 134, 172, 173, 206, 209, 249, 261, 264, 277, 329, 356, 358-360, 364, 408, 446, 486-492, 569, 620, 622, 626, 632, 742, 857, 888, 893, 894, 976, 1040.  
 Nelson, Mr., artist, 332.  
 Nelson, Tams, 939.  
 Nestor, Constantine Veniopoulos, 468.  
 Nestor, Nicholas G. V., 467, 468.  
 Netherlands (Holland), 38, 223; also see Dutch, the.  
 Nettleton, Asahel, 867.  
 Nettleton Pond, 1013.  
 Neubauer, Chris, 464.  
 Nevada, 419.  
 "New Addition" (to Westfield), 943, 967.  
 New Amsterdam (New York), 97.  
 New Bedford, Bristol Co., Mass., 329, 417, 549, 662.  
 New Boston, Berkshire Co., Mass., 4.  
 New Britain, Conn., 443.  
 New Brunswick, Canada, 213.  
 New City (Holyoke), 685.  
 New County, pioneer life in the, 103-120.  
 New England Box Company, 1016.  
 "New England Homestead," 429-515.  
 New England Metal Culvert Company, 962.  
 New England Portable Gas Machine Company, 1013, 1014.  
 New England Power Company, 971.  
 New England Westinghouse plant, 526, 664.  
 New Hampshire, 14, 139, 413, 605, 634, 721, 724, 726, 915, 1018, 1019.  
 New Haven, Conn., 69, 70, 110, 172, 179-183, 185, 248, 293, 319, 325, 365, 748, 857, 896, 978.  
 New Jersey, 198, 694.  
 New Lebanon, N. Y., 856.  
 New London, Conn., 172, 229, 249.  
 "New Marlborough" (Palmer), 950.  
 New Mexico, 596.  
 New Orleans, La., 419.  
 New York (State and City), 97, 166, 179, 217, 221, 265, 268, 292-294, 299, 304, 314, 315, 319, 325, 328, 330, 333, 351, 353, 355, 366, 374, 394, 418, 419, 425, 442, 446, 452, 453, 467, 472, 473, 484, 492, 503, 514, 524, 532, 533, 535, 538, 551, 582, 588, 632, 634, 635, 653, 656, 754, 796, 818, 857, 858, 904, 961.  
 New York University, 428.  
 Newark, N. J., 342.  
 Newburyport, Essex Co., Mass., 331, 526.  
 Newell, Abijah, 929.  
 Newell family, 891.  
 Newmarket Academy, 1042-1044.  
 Newmarket, N. H., 1042, 1044, 1045, 1047.  
 Newport, R. I., 252, 418.  
 Newspapers, 190, 215, 222, 254, 280, 288, 291-308, 313, 319, 320, 322, 324, 328, 395, 403, 418, 419, 429, 465, 473, 483, 490, 501, 502, 515, 523, 539, 540, 542, 581, 582, 600, 609, 610, 624, 625, 653, 657, 688, 702, 710, 711, 718, 748, 811, 858, 901, 923, 936, 962, 963.  
 Newton, George H., 934, 935.  
 Niagara Falls, 588.  
 Nicholls, Abner, 816.  
 Niles, Elder, 977.  
 Nine Mile Pond, 1038.  
 Nipmuck Indians, 125, 126, 137-140, 143, 151, 154-156, 803, 873.  
 Noble Hospital, Westfield, 753.  
 Noble, John, 797.  
 Noble, Seth, 944.  
 Noble, Silas, 859.  
 Noble, Thomas, 779, 944.  
 Noble View Farm, 969.  
 Nonesuch Meadow, 1011.  
 Nonotuck Indians, 38-40, 137, 138.  
 Nonotuck, Mass., 38-40, 137.  
 Nooney Brook, 828.  
 Norcross, Joel, 933.  
 Norcross Quarries, 497.  
 Norfolk, Norfolk Co., Mass., 609.  
 Norfolk, Va., 328.  
 Norman Conquest, 18.  
 Norman, Theodore A., 962.  
 Normandin, E. R., 457.  
 North Blandford, Hampden Co., Mass., 797.  
 North Brookfield, Worcester Co., Mass., 956.  
 North Carolina, 486.  
 North Chester, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 835.  
 North Wilbraham, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 78, 587, 816, 864, 1041.  
 Northampton, Hampshire Co., Mass., 3, 80, 98, 103, 106, 107, 110, 114, 115, 124, 125, 128-131, 140, 143, 151, 152, 159, 160, 163-165, 172, 183, 190, 191, 197, 198, 204-206, 215, 216, 218, 219, 223, 224, 229-233, 260, 269, 275, 294, 296, 314, 316, 319, 322, 333, 334, 345, 454, 460, 520, 582, 635, 637, 667-670, 674,

- 690, 706, 714, 718, 734, 739, 748, 778, 826, 834, 854, 914, 954, 978, 1008, 1035.  
 Northborough, Worcester Co., Mass., 292.  
 Northeastern University, 561.  
 Northfield, Franklin Co., Mass., 106, 125, 126, 140-144, 150, 151, 156, 157, 159, 164, 222.  
 Norton, John, 92-94.  
 Norway, and Norwegians, 393, 497, 501.  
 Norwich (Huntington), Mass., 833, 835, 836, 944.  
 Norwich Bridge, 829.  
 Norwich, Conn., 154, 200, 278, 295, 737, 739.  
 Norwottuck Indians, 125-127.  
 Norwottuck Valley, 117, 119, 124, 252.  
 Novitiate and Summer Home, 721.  
 Noyes Hill, 985.  
 Noyes Pond, 985.  
 Nugent, Patrick, 471.  
 Nurseries, 757; also see Fruit and fruit trees.  
 Nye, Mr., 406, 478.
- Oak Grove Cemetery, 428.  
 Oats, 865, 1026.  
 Oberlin, Ohio, 491, 560.  
 Observatory Restaurant, 518.  
 O'Callaghan, John, 682.  
 Occum, Sampson, 205.  
 Occupations, early; see How the people lived, 245-255.  
 O'Connor, Jerome, 719.  
 O'Dea, Grace (Mrs. John Riley), 470.  
 O'Dea, Margaret, 470.  
 Ohio, 353-355, 567, 701.  
 Ohio River, 329.  
 Oklahoma, 633.  
 Old Colony Historical Society, xv.  
 Old Men's Home, see Home for Aged Men.  
 Oldham, John, 24, 31.  
 Olds, Robert, 928.  
 Olds, Solomon, 914.  
 Olean, N. Y., 352.  
 Olsen, Augustus, 501.  
 Olsen family, 499.  
 Olson, Lars, 497.  
 Ontario, Lake, 298.  
 Optical goods, see Spectacles, manufacture of; Telescope manufacture.  
 "Ordinaries," see Taverns.  
 O'Reilly, P. T., 472.  
 Organizations, see Societies, clubs, and organizations.  
 Origo, Silvio, 481.  
 Orlemanski, Stanley, 494.  
 Ormond Beach, Florida, 518.  
 Orne, James Dwight, 421.  
 Orr, William, 560, 561.  
 Osborn, William P., 993.
- Osborne, Helen (Mrs. James Jackson Storow), 1019.  
 Osborne, John, 734.  
 Osgood family, 663.  
 Osgood, Samuel, 278, 285, 288, 338-342, 345, 356, 465, 565, 569.  
 Otis, Berkshire Co., Mass., 415.  
 Otis Company, 960.  
 Otis, Dr., 475.  
 Otis, George, 586.  
 Otis, Mr., dam builder, 968.  
 Otis Pond, 985.  
 Our Lady of the Elms Academy, 662.  
 Outward Commons, Springfield, 199, 863, 910, 1023, 1024, 1032.  
 Overman Wheel Company, 638, 659, 660.  
 "Overplus land," 863, 1026, 1027.  
 Oxen, see Cattle.
- Packard, A. A., 518, 519, 608.  
 Packard, Arthur Howard, 429.  
 Packard, Timothy, 931, 933.  
 Paddock, James, 879.  
 Paderewski, Ignace Jan, 552.  
 Page, Irving H., 525.  
 Paige, "Pop Corn," 407.  
 Faine, Jedediah, 914.  
 Paine, Timothy, 825, 827, 828.  
 Palmer, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 219, 220, 247, 292, 404, 407, 789, 803, 818, 819, 913, 923, 936, 949-963, 990, xvi.  
 Palmer Carpet Mill, 960.  
 Palmer Center, in Palmer, 957-959.  
 Palmer Company, 960.  
 Palmer "Declaration of Independence," 956.  
 Palmer, the "Elbow Tract," 949-963.  
 Palmer Mills Otis Company, 960.  
 Palmer, Mr., a burglar, 549.  
 Palmer National Bank, 962.  
 Palmer Savings Bank, 962.  
 Palmer Wire Company, 960.  
 Panama, 418-420.  
 Panthers, 950.  
 Papanti, Luigi, 477.  
 Paper city, Holyoke, 667-729.  
 Paper from life-everlasting, 1012.  
 Paper manufacture, 283, 303, 313, 314, 319, 324, 325, 388, 633, 690, 708-713, 717, 718, 723, 752, 753, 780, 783, 836, 868, 923, 967-971, 1009, 1012, 1016, 1041.  
 Papier-maché manufacture, 891.  
 Pappaleonidas, D., 468.  
 Parenteau, Mr., 458.  
 Paris, Ky., 332, 333.  
 Parker, Captain, 141.  
 Parker, Chief-Justice, 281.  
 Parker farm, 407.  
 Parker, Fordis C., "a Springfield mayor," 401.  
 Parker, Robert E., xvi.

- Parks, 324, 356, 367, 389, 409, 499, 540-542, 598, 603, 612, 613, 664, 680, 702-704, 713, 714, 748, 752, 756, 780, 784, 811, 859, 934, 1035.  
 Parks, Elisha, 743.  
 Parks, General, 219.  
 Parks, Luther, 959.  
 Parks, Nathan, 668.  
 Parks, Warham, 745.  
 "Parley, Peter" (Samuel Griswold Goodrich), 630.  
 Parliament, British, 5, 17-19, 73, 177, 178.  
 Parsons, Deacon, 1000.  
 Parsons, Eli, 218-220.  
 Parsons, Enos, 520.  
 Parsons' Hall, 701.  
 Parsons, Hugh, 65, 66, 80, 81-85, 89.  
 Parsons, Jonathan, 1006.  
 Parsons, Joseph, 124, 125.  
 Parsons, Zenas, 215, 216, 221, 222, 223, 260, 262, 326.  
 Partridge, Colonel, 196, 197.  
 Partridge, Edward, 741.  
 Passaga, Gen., 596.  
 Patents, 319, 321.  
 Paterson, N. J., 924.  
 Patriotic societies, see Societies, clubs and organizations.  
 Pattaguate Hill, 961.  
 Patton's block, 483.  
 "Patucket" (South Hadley Falls), 233.  
 Paucatuck Brook, 1009.  
 Paul, Socrates J., 467.  
 Pawtucket Indians, 139.  
 Peabody Assembly Hall, 465.  
 Peabody Cemetery, Springfield, 332, 569.  
 Peabody, William B. O., 465, 569.  
 Fearsons, Judge, 713.  
 Fearsons, W. B. C., 702.  
 Pease, Augustus, 977.  
 Pease, Levi, 291-293, 797, 958.  
 Pease, Marshall, 632.  
 Pease, Simon, 917.  
 Peat bogs and fertilizer, 993.  
 Pebble Hill, 800.  
 Peck, Phineas, 1044.  
 Peck, Ralph E., xvi.  
 Pecowsic, Hampden Co., Mass., 90, 540.  
 Pecowsic Brook, 843, 853, 883, 884, 891.  
 Peddlers, 482, 483, 857, 918.  
 Peekskill, N. Y., 331.  
 Pelham, Hampshire Co., Mass., 217, 247, 296, 788, 826, 890, 956, 1007, 1034.  
 Pelissier, George E., 704.  
 Pell and Corbett, 551.  
 Pemigewasset River, 197.  
 Pennsylvania, 314, 353, 355, 688, 1008.  
 Penny Brook, 803.  
 "Penny News," 308.  
 Fenobscot Bay, Maine, 830.  
 Penobscot Indians, 166.  
 Penrose, Stephen, 798.  
 People and events, 311-347.  
 Pepper, Francis, 172.  
 Pepper, Henry, 1011.  
 Pepper, partner of Spalding, 659.  
 Pequot Indians, 31, 35, 38, 134, 138, 154.  
 Pequot Lakes, 754.  
 Perkins family, 406, 701.  
 Perkins, Henry J., 784.  
 Perkins, J. L., 719.  
 Perkins Machine and Gear Company, 1016.  
 Perkins mills, the, 634.  
 Perkins and Brown, 487.  
 "Peggy's Dipping Hole," 1025.  
 Pershing, John Joseph, 596.  
 Persia, 585.  
 Peru, 418.  
 Petersen, Tyco, 502.  
 Petersham, Worcester Co., Mass., 958.  
 Pharos Tourist Agency, 467.  
 Phelps, Isaac, 740.  
 Phelps, Oliver, 857.  
 Phelps, Willis, 269.  
 Phelps-Gorham land purchase, 857.  
 Philadelphia, Pa., 262, 293, 299, 333, 336, 366, 486, 515, 656, 660, 930.  
 Philip, King, 976; also see War, King Philip's.  
 Philippine Islands, and Manila, 417, 455, 584.  
 Phillips, Cornelius E., 606.  
 Philo Brook, 777.  
 Phineas, Capt., 630.  
 Photography, 638, 753.  
 Physicians, see Medical profession.  
 Pigeons, 74, 240, 406, 843, 844.  
 Pilalas, Eleftherius S., 465.  
 Pilalas, Stavros, 465.  
 Piligian family, 453.  
 "Pinchin, William, Gentleman," 576; also see Pynchon, William.  
 Pine Mountain, 869.  
 Pinion Wire Manufacturing Company, 963.  
 Pioneer Blodgett, settler of Holland, 873-879.  
 Pioneer life in the new county, 103-120.  
 Pipe and fittings manufacture, 515, 535.  
 Pirates, 293, 294.  
 Pitcher Brook, 969.  
 Pittsburgh, Pa., 332, 352-354, 584.  
 Pittsfield, Berkshire Co., Mass., 220, 249, 252, 333.  
 Pius IX, Pope, 472.  
 Pixley, Joseph, 787.  
 Planet Company, 753.  
 Plants, see Flora; Grains; Vegetables.  
 Platt, Peter, 460.  
 Playgrounds, see Athletics.  
 Plunkett, Thomas F., 835.  
 Plunkettville (North Chester), 835.  
 Plymouth Colony, Mass., 24, 36, 69, 137, 140, 151, 469.  
 Pocasset, Barnstable Co., Mass., 139, 140.



- Pocumtuck (Deerfield), 142.  
 Pocumtuck Indians, 125.  
 Poetry, 60, 265, 270, 297, 298, 332, 569, 761, 762, 764, 782, 813, 937, 957, 1029-1031.  
 "Pokeham" (Hampden), 869.  
 Poland, and the Poles, 394, 492-495, 656, 657, 664, 715, 970, 1042.  
 Pole Bridge Brook, 1025.  
 Poli, S. Z., 526.  
 Poli Theatre, 526.  
 Police, 445, 474, 482, 483, 485, 501, 544, 547-550, 608, 690, 715; also see Court, Police.  
 Polk, James Knox, 316, 320.  
 Pollard, Capt., 351.  
 Pomeroy, Mary, Mrs., 234.  
 Pomeroy, Moses, 685.  
 Pomeroy Mountain, 241.  
 Pomeroy, Phœbus, 685.  
 Pomeroy, Titus, 230.  
 Pomfret, Conn., 929.  
 Pond, Preston C., xvi.  
 Ponder, Nathaniel, 741.  
 Poorhouse, Springfield, built in 1802, 278.  
 Pope Pius IX, 472.  
 "Pop-robin," 265.  
 Porkoney, Josephine, 1010.  
 Porter Company, 783.  
 Porter, E., 779.  
 Porter, Edgar Sheffield, 799.  
 Porter, General, 216.  
 Porter, John, 780.  
 Porter, Josephine E. S., Mrs., 799.  
 Porter, Lake, 542.  
 Porter, Mrs., 185.  
 Porter, Moses, 251.  
 Porter, Samuel, 160, 588.  
 Porter, Sherman D., 542.  
 Portland, Conn., 497, 500.  
 Portland, Ore., 701.  
 Portsmouth, R. I., 418.  
 Post riders, 222, 292, 630.  
 Post-offices, 283, 293, 336, 357, 358, 403, 408, 668, 754, 818, 834, 835, 918, 984.  
 Potash Brook, 793, 800.  
 Potash manufacture, 742, 793, 835, 868, 919, 992, 1038.  
 Potatoes, 247, 470, 541, 681, 742, 779, 810, 918, 939, 940, 950, 951.  
 Potomac River, 352.  
 Potter, Francis, 419.  
 Potter, John, 1019.  
 Pottery manufacture, 815, 879, 883.  
 Potvin family, 458.  
 Potvin, Gilbert, 712.  
 Poultry, 41, 253, 406, 414, 629, 765, 783, 784, 859, 897, 1003, 1037; also see Pigeons; Turkeys.  
 Poverty Hills, 975.  
 Power, 517, 536, 537, 542, 609, 633, 635, 670, 674, 692, 701, 705, 710-714, 718, 722-726, 757, 780, 818, 853, 868, 875, 921, 959, 961, 968, 971, 1008, 1013; also see Dams.  
 Pownall, Thomas, 928.  
 Pratt, George Dwight, 551.  
 Pratt, John, 22.  
 Prayer, George, 633.  
 Prescott, Benjamin, 670.  
 Prescott, Hampshire Co., Mass., 1020.  
 Price, Samuel, xv.  
 Price, Sterling, 418.  
 Prichard, Goodman, 47.  
 Prince, Gen., 418.  
 Princeton University, 560.  
 Printers, 283, 600, 896, 1042; also see Lithography; also see Newspapers.  
 Prisons, 98, 99, 106, 128, 366, 367, 369, 443, 444, 609, 686; also see Jails.  
 Prophetstown, Ill., 329.  
 Prospect Park, Holyoke, 680, 713.  
 Proulx, Mr., 455, 456.  
 Providence, R. I., 513, 539, 613, 811, 816-818.  
 "Providence Hill," 180, 182.  
 Provin Mountain, 783, 979.  
 Provin Mountain Reservoir, 533, 536.  
 Provincetown, Barnstable Co., Mass., 915.  
 Provost, John, 458.  
 Public Reservations, trustees of, 703, 704.  
 Public Works Administration ("PWA"), 600.  
 Publishers, 336; also see Newspapers.  
 Publisher's note, xv.  
 Pudding Hill, 800.  
 Pump manufacture, 1012, 1016.  
 Pump, town, 373, 374.  
 Pumpkins, 246-248, 251, 782, 810, 950.  
 Punch Bowl Mountain, 969.  
 "Pure Food City" (Westfield), 754.  
 Puritan statue, St. Gaudens' frontispiece Vol. II.  
 Putnam, Israel, 745.  
 Put's Bridge, 918.  
 Pynchon, Ann (Mrs. Henry Smith), 20, 26, 60, 95.  
 Pynchon, Capt., 262.  
 Pynchon, Charles, 221.  
 Pynchon, Edward, 260.  
 Pynchon, John, 3, 20, 30, 37, 66, 75, 77, 89, 90, 92, 95-99, 104, 106, 110, 112-114, 116, 117, 119, 124, 125, 128-132, 137-139, 141, 144-151, 153, 156, 165, 170-173, 181, 195, 198, 205, 230, 237, 238, 251, 342, 617, 733, 737.  
 Pynchon, John, Mrs., see Wyllys, Amy.  
 Pynchon, Joseph, 173.  
 Pynchon, Joseph C., 519.  
 Pynchon, Margaret, 20.  
 Pynchon, Mary (Mrs. Elizur Holyoke), 20, 30, 59-60, 569.  
 Pynchon Memorial Museum, 105, 587, 588.  
 Pynchon, Mr., 213, 282, 589, 811, 1009.



- Pynchon, Nicholas, 18.  
 Pynchon Park, Springfield, 389, 612.  
 Pynchon, Stephen, 818.  
 Pynchon, William, 18-27, 29-31, 35-46, 49-51, 55-59, 61-63, 67, 68, 70, 73, 77, 84, 85, 108, 116, 132, 200, 201, 205, 238, 246, 342, 389, 486, 519, 521, 529, 550, 569, 575, 587, 589, 604, 611-613, 627, 781, 806, 864, 883, 997, 1023, 1026, vii.  
 Pynchon, William, comes to the Connecticut Valley, 17-31.  
 Pynchon, William, the heresy of, 89-99, 576.  
 Pynchon, William, Mrs., 20, 21.  
 Quabaug, or Quaboag, 99, 140, 141, 736, 805, 818.  
 Quabaug Indians, 949.  
 Quabaug River, 803, 949, 961.  
 Quam family, 805.  
 Quarries, 10, 497, 757, 783, 799, 837, 843, 847, 902, 931, 935, 936, 970, 979.  
 Quebec, Canada, 158, 456, 885, 943.  
 Quigley, James, 830.  
 Quilty, William J., 549.  
 Quincy, Norfolk Co., Mass., 339.  
 Raccoons, 238, 239, 692, 870.  
 Racial groups in Hampden County, 451-504.  
 Radio and wireless telegraph, 452, 525, 539, 598, 607, 772, 1011.  
 Railroad car manufacture, 511.  
 Railroad engine manufacture, 509-511, 513.  
 Railroads:  
   Athol, 544, 960.  
   Boston and Albany, 10, 286, 331, 336, 386, 388, 471, 474, 493, 495, 508, 510, 607, 819, 921, 923, 959, 967, 1013, 1016, 1040.  
   Boston and Maine, 603, 659, 664, 725.  
   Canal, 748.  
   Connecticut River, 326, 344, 388, 508, 631, 635, 671, 690.  
   Great Western, 1040.  
   Hartford and Erie, 819.  
   Hartford and New Haven, 326.  
   Hartford and Springfield, 388.  
   Holyoke and Westfield, 690.  
   Lake Shore, 421.  
   Michigan Southern, 286.  
   New London Northern, 960.  
   New York, New Haven and Hartford, 388, 508, 601, 849.  
   "Putty Railroad," 759.  
   Springfield, Athol and Northeastern, 921.  
   Springfield and Longmeadow, 510.  
   Springfield to Providence, 510.  
   Ware River, 960.  
   Western, 326, 336, 352, 386, 388, 508, 509, 530, 748, 752, 921, 923, 1042.  
 Railways, street, 499, 540, 599, 602, 607, 658, 664, 702-704, 712, 752, 754, 772, 968.  
 Rand, Jasper, 755.  
 Ranger, Casper, Lumber Company, 718.  
 Rangers, the Corps of, 745.  
 "Ranging Forces," 795.  
 Ranlet, Mr., 702, 710.  
 Rapaport, Samuel, 485.  
 Rathbone, A. B., 963.  
 Rathbone, J., 963.  
 Rattlesnake Mountain, 877.  
 Ravine Mill, 863, 868.  
 Ray, Edwin, 521.  
 Ray, partner of Taylor, 462.  
 Reader, John, 46.  
 Reardon, G. T., 472.  
 Reccord, Augustus P., 566.  
 Records, public and church, 3, 99, 149, 385, 447, 485, 570, 589, 739, 976, 977, 991, 1000.  
 Reed, David Allen, 557.  
 Reeve, Ezra, 874, 877, 990.  
 Regicides, the, 177-192.  
 Regional history of Hampden County, 615-1047.  
 Rehn, Carl, 501.  
 Religion, see Church and religion; Church denominations; Churches; Ministers.  
 Religious societies, see Church denominations; see Societies, clubs, and organizations.  
 Remington, William M., 524.  
 Republicans, 308, 311, 457, 469, 490, 770, 771, 837.  
 Reservoirs, 529-537; also see Dams; Water supply.  
 Restaurants, 357, 518, 878; also see Hotels; Taverns.  
 Revere, Paul, 625, 766.  
 Revolution, see War, Revolutionary.  
 Revolution (the) and its aftermath, 213-226.  
 Reynolds, partner of Sackett, 478.  
 Rhode Island, 139, 251, 315, 488, 796.  
 Rice, Caleb, 345, 385, 523.  
 Rice, John, 549.  
 Rice, William, 577, 578.  
 Richard Salter Storrs Library, 900, 901.  
 Richardson, H. H., 565.  
 Richmond, George A., 429.  
 Richmond Iron Company, 970.  
 Richmond, Va., 489, 632.  
 Riddle, Jack, 513.  
 Rider, William, 369.  
 Ridge's Food for Infants and Invalids, 960.  
 Riedesel, Frederick Adolph, 744, 1006.  
 Riley Brook, 667.  
 Riley, Grace, 470.  
 Riley, Isaac, 470.

- Riley, Jacob, 470.  
 Riley, John, 470, 667.  
 Riley, Jonathan, 470.  
 Riley, Mary, 470.  
 Riley, Sarah, 470.  
 Rio Grande, 316.  
 Ripley, James Wolfe, 569.  
 Rittenberg, Louis, 482, 483.  
 Rivers, geology of, 9-14.  
 Rivers, James A., 597.  
 Riverside Grove, Agawam, 784.  
 Riverside Park, Agawam, 780, 784.  
 Roads, see Highways; Railroads; Railways, street.  
 Roaring Thunder's leap, 907, 908.  
 Robinson family, 853.  
 Robinson, George Dexter, 637, 638.  
 Robinson, John C., 782, xv.  
 Robinson, Rufus, 679.  
 Robinson, Timothy, 854, 856.  
 Rochester, N. H., 1044.  
 Rock House Mountain, 945.  
 Rock Island, Ill., 591.  
 Rock River, 329.  
 Rockefeller, John Davison, 518.  
 Rockrimmon Hill, 648.  
 Rocks, 9-14; also see Minerals; Quarries; Sandstone.  
 Rockville, Conn., 698, 699.  
 "Rocky Dundy," or "Dunder," 869.  
 Rocky Mountains, 329.  
 Rogers, Jabez, 983.  
 Rogers, John, 270.  
 Rogers, Robert, 745.  
 Rogers and Company, 931.  
 Rolls-Royce Company, 598.  
 Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, 599, 613.  
 Roosevelt, Theodore, 753.  
 "Rooster" on church spire, 285, 334, 544, 565.  
 Root, Elisha, 742.  
 Root, Mr., fire chief, 546, 547.  
 Root, Oliver, 745.  
 Roper's clover mill, 868, 1038.  
 Rose, David, 854, 857.  
 Rose, Deacon, 984.  
 Rose, Israel, 829.  
 Rose, Jonathan, 854.  
 Rosenstein, Benjamin, 484.  
 Ross, Donald, 904.  
 Round Hill, 148, 284, 438, 460, 464.  
 Round Top, 838, 839.  
 Rousseau family, 455.  
 Rowe, Franklin Co., Mass., 828.  
 Rowlandson, Mary, Mrs., 164, 253.  
 Roxbury, Suffolk Co., Mass., 21-23, 25, 27, 50, 51, 95, 298, 366, 742, 910, 997.  
 Roxbury Rubber Company, 366.  
 Roy, J. G., 457.  
 Royce, Harrison G., 993.  
 Rubber manufacture, 366-370, 462, 493, 660, 661, 664.  
 Rum Road, 1011.  
 Rumrill, James, 510, 585.  
 Russell, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 761, 863, 944, 967-971.  
 Russell, population, 967, 971.  
 Russell, which includes Woronoco, 967-971.  
 Russell, John, 152, 159, 181, 182, 185-187.  
 Russell, Napoleon E., 457.  
 Russell, Newton H., 693.  
 Russia, and the Russians, 417, 483, 492, 495, 496.  
 Ruter, Martin, 1044.  
 Rutland, Worcester Co., Mass., 217, 218, 825, 826.  
 Ryan, Phillip J., 474.  
 Rye, 245, 265, 268, 281, 378, 623, 669, 742, 779, 780, 783, 810, 831, 865, 920, 951, 978, 1026, 1037, 1039.  
 Saab, Paul A., 503.  
 Sabin, Abishai, 928.  
 Sabin, Noah, 929.  
 Sacket, Erastus, 742.  
 Sackett, Daniel, 746.  
 Sackett, John, 734, 738.  
 Sackett and Reynolds, 478.  
 Sacketts Harbor, N. Y., 327.  
 Sackett's Tavern, 789.  
 "Sage of Chicopee, the," 643.  
 St. Gaudens' statues, 57, 360, 575, 589, frontispiece Vol. II.  
 St. Johnsbury, Vt., 671.  
 St. Louis, Mo., 333, 559, 660.  
 Salamanca, N. Y., 353.  
 Sale, John, 166.  
 Salem, Essex Co., Mass., 19, 21, 22, 117, 331, 417, 588, 863, 911, 989.  
 Salmon Falls, 761, 968.  
 Saltonstall, Richard, 181.  
 Saltonstall, Robert, 55, 56.  
 San Francisco, Calif., 419, 549.  
 Sanatoriums, see Hospitals.  
 Sanborn, Franklin Benjamin, 582.  
 Sanderson, Alonzo, 985.  
 Sanderson Brook, 838.  
 Sanderson, Emma (Mrs. Edward Bella-my), 655.  
 Sanderson, Harvey, 282, 342.  
 Sanderson, Julia (Mrs. Frank Crumit), 604, 904.  
 Sandstone, 9-11, 498.  
 Sankey, Ira David, 335, 405, 538, 637.  
 Sarah Gillett Home for the Aged, 753.  
 Saratoga, N. Y., 217, 743.  
 Sargeant, Horatio L., 421.  
 Sargeant, Jacob, 590.  
 Sargeant, John, 293, 741.  
 Sargeant and Chapin, 325.  
 Savage, Major, 151, 164, 884.  
 Savannah, Ga., 334.  
 Sawmills, 58, 59, 99, 110, 117, 119, 143.

- 230, 283, 294, 314, 619, 632, 668, 779, 793, 828, 834, 835, 845, 863, 868, 890, 896, 919, 930, 952, 959, 968, 978, 989, 993, 1013, 1025, 1038.
- Saxton, George, 734.
- Saybrook, Conn., 66, 67, 126, 229, 230.
- Scandinavians, 481, 497-502; also see Denmark; Norway; Sweden.
- Scantic River, 845, 863, 868, 870, 1028, 1038.
- Scantic River and Hampden, 863-870.
- Scantic Woolen Mill Company, 868.
- Schenectady, N. Y., 277.
- Schermerhorn, Mary Dwight (Mrs. Samuel Bowles), 541.
- Schools, 98, 106, 110-112, 169, 270, 277, 282, 297, 323, 373, 377, 402, 405, 441, 453, 460, 464, 465, 474, 485, 489, 492, 494, 547, 549, 553, 567, 579, 582, 595, 609, 611, 619-621, 626, 629, 630, 632, 637, 657, 662-664, 673, 692, 694, 706, 713, 715, 716, 739, 740, 747-749, 751-754, 757, 759-765, 769, 772, 778, 783, 789, 795-797, 799, 812-816, 819, 820, 827-829, 834, 835, 853, 856, 858, 863, 869, 870, 876-878, 884, 885, 891, 898, 913, 916, 923, 928, 929, 932, 935, 936, 951, 952, 959, 963, 970, 976, 977, 985, 999, 1000, 1002, 1004, 1005, 1010, 1019, 1025, 1029, 1032, 1035-1037, 1040, 1042; also see Amherst College; Bowdoin College; Cambridge University; Carlisle; Chicopee High; Columbia University; French-American College; Hampden Academy; Hampden County Training School; Harvard College and University; Hitchcock Free High School; Holyoke High School; Holyoke Vocational School; International Y. M. C. A. Training School; Johns Hopkins University; Kindergartens; Massachusetts Agricultural College; Mater Dolorosa School; MacDuffie School for Girls; Monson Academy; Mount Holyoke College; New York University; Newmarket Academy; Northeastern University; Smith College; Springfield Central High School; Springfield Classical High School; Springfield College; Springfield Elm Street School; Springfield High School; State Normal School; State Primary School; Stebbins Classical Institute; Stebbins' Dancing School; Technical High School; Union College; West Point, N. Y.; Westfield Academy; Westfield High School; Westfield Normal School; Whitman College; Wilbraham Academy; Williams College; Yale College and University.
- Schools and teachers, 413-421.
- Schumann-Heink, Ernestine, Madame, 552.
- Schurr, Burlingham, 692, 695.
- Scotch-Irish, 247, 470, 951, 952.
- Scotch-Irish, settlers of Blandford, 787-800.
- Scotland, and the Scotch, 51, 73, 98, 205, 351, 513, 517, 583, 791, 826, 829, 848, 951, 954, 1042.
- Scott, John, 104.
- Scott, Mr., 957.
- Scott, Walter, 189, 365.
- Scott, Winfield, 419.
- Scripter, Eleazer, 868.
- Seabury, Capt., 294.
- Seaman, Meta M., Mrs., xv.
- Searle, John, 45.
- Seatin' Lot, 1001, 1011.
- Sederlund, William, 500.
- Sellick, Daniel, 469.
- Sergeant, John, 293, 741.
- Sessions, Charles, 868.
- Sessions, Elizabeth, 870.
- Sessions, Francis C., 869.
- Sessions, Robert, 868, 869.
- Sessions, Sumner, 868, 1039.
- Settlers and soldiers, 123-134.
- Severance, Lawyer, 640, 643, 644.
- Sewall, Judge, 198.
- Sewell, Bessie, 85.
- Sexton, Joseph, 740.
- Seymour, Stephen E., 586, 587.
- "Shad Lane," West Springfield, 1005, 1006.
- Shaker Pond, 843.
- Shatterack Pond, 944.
- Shattuck, Calvin, 343.
- Shaw, Capt., 754.
- Shaw, Eden, 993.
- Shaw, Elijah, 993.
- Shaw, John, 989.
- Shaw, Joshua, 811, 956, 957.
- Shaw Manufacturing Company, 993.
- Shaw, Samuel, 960, 961.
- Shaw, Seth, 990.
- Shaw and Kirkham, 516.
- "Shawville," Wales, Mass., 989.
- Shays, Daniel, 217-220, 625, 890, 956, 977, 1007, 1034, 1035.
- Shays' Rebellion, 217-220, 335, 471, 625, 654, 668, 746, 856, 890, 914, 956, 1007, 1034, 1035.
- Shea, Catharine, Mrs., 719.
- Shean, Charles, 474.
- Shearer, James, 953.
- Sheedy, Mr., a burglar, 549.
- Sheehan, "Big Tom," 702.
- Sheep, 74, 98, 109, 119, 120, 159, 170, 172, 235, 236, 238, 251, 276, 296, 342, 541, 620, 627, 793, 797, 803, 809, 846, 923, 938, 939, 955, 1041.
- Sheep Pasture Hill, 803.
- Sheffield, Berkshire Co., Mass., 951.
- Sheldon, David, 413.
- Sheldon, George, 187-189.
- Sheldon, Isaac, 106.



- Sheldon, John, 617, 953.  
 Sheldon, Major-General, 281.  
 Shelton, George H., 596.  
 Shepard, Capt., 834.  
 Shepard, William, 217-220, 743-746, 758,  
     866, 977, 1007, 1034, 1035.  
 Shepherd's Island, 637, 638.  
 Sheridan, Philip Henry, 421.  
 Sherman, Benjamin, 809.  
 Sherman, Gardner M., 694.  
 Sherman, John, 809, 928.  
 Sherman's Pond, 805, 815, 949.  
 Shields, Ben, 473.  
 Shilby, Joe, 502.  
 Shingle Swamp, 910.  
 "Ship-money," 5.  
 Shipping, 21, 44, 56, 66-70, 97, 116, 222,  
     229-231, 252, 268, 278, 280, 669, 806.  
 Ships, steamboats, etc.:  
     Agawam, 280, 288, 321.  
     Albion, 275.  
     Arbella, 20.  
     Barnet, 280.  
     Blanchard, 279-281, 321.  
     Blandford, 791.  
     Blessing of the Bay, 27.  
     Charger, 421.  
     Columbus, 417.  
     Creole, 487.  
     Cutwater, 421.  
     Eagle, The, 280.  
     Eclipse, 417.  
     El Sud, 426.  
     Enterprise, 294.  
     Friendship, 888.  
     General Sheldon, 748.  
     Glass steamer, 869.  
     Golden Gate, 420.  
     Grand Turk, 418.  
     Greenfield, 288.  
     Hall, William, 280.  
     Hampshire, 1005.  
     Hampshire, The, 625.  
     Joseph, 294.  
     Lehigh, 426.  
     Lusitania, 719.  
     Massachusetts, 280, 287, 321.  
     Mayflower, 337, 469.  
     Mobile, 429, 430.  
     Moselle, 329.  
     Pecousic, 512.  
     Porpoise, 328.  
     Prairie, 426.  
     Sheldon, General, 748.  
     Speedwell, 888.  
     Springfield, 421.  
     Strafford, 419.  
     Sud, El, 426.  
     Supply, 328.  
     Swan, 417.  
     Sylvia, 784.  
     The Eagle, 280.  
     The Hampshire, 625.  
     Trial, 1005.  
     Vermont, 279, 280, 321, 322.  
     Vincennes, 328.  
     Wallace, 417.  
     West Springfield, 1005.  
     William Hall, 280.  
     Yankee Blade, 521.  
 Shoemakers and dealers, 484, 516, 589,  
     608, 632, 683, 816, 835, 836, 868, 879,  
     895, 935, 938, 992, 1006.  
 Shortsleeves family, 455.  
 Shredd and Knight, 517.  
 Shrewsbury, Worcester Co., Mass., 958.  
 Shrine Hospital for Crippled Children,  
     389, 564.  
 Shulc, Peter, 493.  
 Shurtlef, Dr., 799.  
 Shurtleff, William S., 473.  
 Shute, Samuel, 788.  
 Sievers, Dietrich H., 462, 463.  
 Sigerist, Henry E.  
 Signs, see Superstitions.  
 Sikes, Increase, 168.  
 Sikes, Nathaniel, 929.  
 Sikes, Reuben, 221, 292.  
 Sikes, Richard, 74, 98.  
 Silk manufacture, 343, 706-708, 815, 931,  
     959.  
 Simmons, Edward, 565.  
 Simonds, Elizabeth (Mrs. Nathaniel Chap-  
     man), 351.  
 Simplon Tunnel, 533.  
 Simsbury, Conn., 978.  
 Singer, Ida, 485.  
 Singing, see Music.  
 Siog Lake, 879.  
 Sixteen Acres, Hampden Co., Mass., 1025,  
     1038.  
 Skating, and skate manufacturing, 266, 511,  
     512, 541, 542, 656, 766.  
 Skeelee, Amos, 630.  
 Skenungonuck Falls, 633.  
 Skinner, Belle, 719.  
 Skinner Coffee House, 719.  
 Skinner, Elizabeth, 650.  
 Skinner, Joseph, 718, xvi.  
 Skinner, Joseph A., 692.  
 Skinner, William, 692, 706-708, 718.  
 Skinner, William, and Sons, 707, 708, 718.  
 "Skinnerville," Holyoke, 706.  
 Skipmuck, Hampden Co., Mass., 197, 319,  
     617-664.  
 Skipmuck and Chicopee, 617-664.  
 Skunks, 237.  
 Skyline Trail, 839.  
 Slavery, 51, 134, 172, 173, 206, 209, 213,  
     259, 261, 264, 277, 303, 346, 356, 359,  
     364, 486-490, 620, 622, 626, 632, 893,  
     894, 1040.



- Sleighs, 117, 219, 251, 276, 403, 409, 741, 749, 761, 762, 765, 792, 848, 894, 897, 958, 1024, 1032.  
 Sloper, Samuel, 791.  
 Smith, Abner, 834.  
 Smith, Alfred Emanuel, 772.  
 Smith College, Northampton, 477, 699.  
 Smith, Edwin, 755.  
 Smith family, 1009.  
 Smith, Freeman A., 962.  
 Smith, George Walter Vincent, 451, 575, 584, 585.  
 Smith, Henry, 26, 39, 47, 58, 60, 77, 83, 93, 95-97.  
 Smith, Henry, Mrs., see Pynchon, Ann.  
 Smith, Henry B., 752.  
 Smith, Hiram, 838, 839.  
 Smith, Horace, 388.  
 Smith, James, 977.  
 Smith, Jedediah, 792.  
 Smith, John, 826.  
 Smith men bitten by snakes, 241.  
 Smith, Mrs., 265.  
 Smith, Mosely, 690.  
 Smith, Nathan, 911.  
 Smith, Samuel, 185, 223.  
 Smith, Timothy, 830, 833.  
 Smith, William, 397, 633.  
 Smith, William T., 755.  
 Smith and Bassette, 901.  
 Smith and Dore, 924.  
 Smith-Lever Bill, 1017.  
 Smith and Murray, 516.  
 Smith and Wesson, 388, 477, 495, 499, 511, 563.  
 Smiths Ferry, 4, 231, 667, 714.  
 Smoking, see Tobacco.  
 Smyrna, 414.  
 Snakes, 240, 241, 685, 693, 694, 845, 877, 945, 1029-1031.  
 Snell, Sampel, 690.  
 Soap manufacture, 255, 831, 992.  
 Socialists, 451, 481, 653-655.  
 Societies, clubs, and organizations:  
   Agawam Breeders' Association, 782.  
   Ambelish Fishing Society, 389.  
   American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1002.  
   American Guild of Organists, 699.  
   American Gymnastic Union, 464.  
   American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, 468.  
   American Horse Show Association, 904.  
   American Legion, 782, 903.  
   American Red Cross, 468, 607, 610, 758.  
   American Temperance Society, 815.  
   Appalachian Mountain Club, 969.  
   Art Guild, 870.  
   Atlanta Boat Club, 389.  
   Augmenting Social Library Association, 934.  
   Bellamy Club, 653.  
   Benevolent Society for the Propagation of Cremation, 391.  
   Blandford Club, 799.  
   B'nai B'rith Lodge, 483, 485.  
   Boy Scouts, 613, 902.  
   Boys' Club, 473.  
   "Braza," 500.  
   Breakfast Association, 899.  
   Brimfield Thief Detective Society, 820.  
   Brimfield Literary Association, 820.  
   Brookside Young Women's Camp, 571.  
   Camp Atwater, 491.  
   Central Labor Union, 600.  
   Coachman's Aid Society, 389.  
   Community Club, 971.  
   Connecticut Valley Riding Association, 904.  
   Daughters of the American Revolution, 570, 719.  
   Dunbar Club for Boys, 491.  
   Dunbar Club for Girls, 491.  
   Dunbar Community League, 491.  
   East Longmeadow Rod and Gun Club, 870.  
   Elks Lodge, 491.  
   Exchange Club, 717.  
   Falco Athletic Association, 705.  
   Four-H Clubs, 1017.  
   Free and Accepted Masons, 491.  
   French Foresters, 460.  
   Galilean Fishermen, 491.  
   Gapa, 469.  
   Garden Club, 389.  
   Gileadites, 487.  
   Girl Reserves, 571.  
   Girl Scouts, 570.  
   Good Samaritans, 491.  
   Grand Army of the Republic, 427, 758.  
   Grange, 799, 1041.  
   Hampden County Horticultural Society, 389.  
   Hampden County Temperance Society, 391.  
   Hebrew Ladies' Relief Association, 485.  
   Hoc, 453.  
   Holyoke Board of Trade, 715.  
   Holyoke Business Men's Association, 715.  
   Holyoke Chamber of Commerce, 715.  
   Holyoke Women's Club, 718.  
   Hunchag, 453.  
   Italian-American Protective League, 481.  
   Junior Order of the Sons of Pericles, 469.  
   Kamp Komfort, 389.  
   Karam Society, 503.  
   King's Daughters, 936.  
   Knights of Columbus, 716.  
   Knights of Pythias, 491.  
   Labor Unions, 439, 600.  
   Ladies' Benevolent Society, 800, 868.  
   Ladies of Charity, 719.

- Lambs' Club, 904.  
 Ligue des Patriots, 460.  
 Lions Club, 717.  
 Longmeadow Country Club, 904.  
 Longmeadow Junior Horse Show, 904.  
 Longmeadow Library Society, 891.  
 Longmeadow Maternal Association, 902.  
 Longmeadow Players, 902.  
 Longmeadow Thief Detecting Society, 898.  
 Longmeadow Woman's Club, 903.  
 Ludlow Country Club, 924.  
 Maids of Athens, 469.  
 Masonic building, Springfield, 396.  
 Mt. Lebanon Girls' Club, 503.  
 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 491.  
 National Order of Ahepa, 467-469.  
 Odd Fellows, 485, 491, 501.  
 Olympus Club, 820.  
 Order of Runeberg, 502.  
 Order of the Sisters of St. Joseph, 662.  
 Orpheus Club, 583.  
 Orpheus Drangei, 500.  
 Palmer Teachers' Association, 963.  
 Patria Society, 479.  
 Polish Alliance, 494.  
 Polish Citizens' Club, 494.  
 Polish Women's Alliance, 494.  
 Rosary Guild, 494.  
 Rotary Club, 716.  
 St. Anthony's Young Boys' Club, 503.  
 St. Joseph's Society, 494.  
 Saturday Morning Club, 391.  
 Shriners, 389, 564.  
 Shuetzenverein, 464.  
 Sisters of Nazareth, 494.  
 Sisters of Providence, 563, 700, 719, 721.  
 Social Library Company, 934.  
 Societa Unione e Fratellanza Italiana, 480.  
 Société des Artisans Canadiens Française, 460.  
 Society of John Sobieski, 493.  
 Society for the Protection of the Ashes of the Dead, 389.  
 Soldiers' Aid societies, 632, 751.  
 Soldiers' Relief Association, 781.  
 Sons of the American Revolution, 570.  
 Sons of Benjamin, Commonwealth Lodge, 484.  
 Sons of Liberty, 955.  
 Springfield Boys' Club, 571.  
 Springfield Club, 510.  
 Springfield Country Club, 607, 1018.  
 Springfield Garden Club, 613.  
 Springfield Girls' Club, 879.  
 Springfield Mutual Benefit Association, 491.  
 Springfield Rod and Gun Club, 390.  
 Springfield Stamp Club, 515.  
 Springfield Yacht Club, 512.  
 Tashnag, 453.  
 Tegnic Lodge, 500.  
 Tekoa Country Club, 754.  
 The Dorcas, 391.  
 Tong, 453, 454.  
 Turn Verein, 460, 461, 463, 464.  
 Union Agricultural and Horticultural Society, 798.  
 Union St. Jean Baptiste, 460.  
 Vasa Lodge, 500.  
 Veterans' Corps, 427.  
 Veterans of Foreign Wars, 758.  
 Volcanic Research Society, 389.  
 Westfield Rod and Gun Club, 755.  
 Winthrop Club, 390.  
 Women's Clubs, 391, 392.  
 Women's Municipal League, 717.  
 Worcester Continentals, 758.  
 Young Girls' Sewing Club, 389.  
 Young Men's Christian Association, 451, 489, 557, 560, 561, 752.  
 Young Men's Hebrew Association, 431, 485.  
 Young Men's Library Association, 891.  
 Young Men's Literary Club, 389.  
 Young Women's Christian Association, 571, 838.  
 Soldiers and settlers, 123-134.  
 Some interesting items, 373-381.  
 Somers, Conn., 291, 292, 843, 858, 867, 1027.  
 Sophocles, Prof., 932.  
 Sorel, Canada, 158, 456.  
 South America, 366, 417, 653.  
 South Amherst, Hampshire Co., Mass., 694.  
 South Bolton, Conn., 446.  
 South Brimfield, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 875, 989-992.  
 South Carolina, 324, 486, 876.  
 South Framingham, Middlesex Co., Mass., 24, 427.  
 South Hadley, Hampshire Co., Mass., 230, 231, 233, 238, 275, 609, 674, 679, 690, 718, 724-726, 911, 914, 933, 1026.  
 South Hadley Falls, 230, 233, 235, 288, 314, 324, 637, 669, 671, 678, 679, 688, 690, 723, 725-727.  
 South Holyoke, Hampden Co., Mass., 657, 712, 713.  
 South Manchester, Conn., 500, 501.  
 South Monson, Hampden Co., Mass., 934.  
 "South Side," 734.  
 "South Springfield" (Longmeadow), 883.  
 South Vernon, Vt., 508.  
 South Wilbraham, Hampden Co., Mass., 863, 864, 867-869, 1040.  
 South Wilbraham Manufacturing Company, 868.  
 Southampton, Hampshire Co., Mass., 189, 241, 296, 748, 789, 944.

- Southbridge, Worcester Co., Mass., 403, 404, 406.  
 Southwick, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 296, 755, 783, 975-979, 1019.  
 Southwick, and Congamond Lakes, 975-979.  
 Southwick Ponds, 761, 766.  
 Southwick, population, 976.  
 Southworth, A. S., 638.  
 Southworth, Edward, 1011.  
 Southworth Paper Company, 1016.  
 Southworth, Wells, 1011.  
 Spain, and cities of, 20, 247, 393, 455; also see War, Spanish-American.  
 Spalding, A. G., and Brothers, 656, 660, 664.  
 Spalding, Justin, 663.  
 Spalding and Pepper Company, 659.  
 Spanish-American War, 425-431; also see War, Spanish-American.  
 Spectacle Pond, 170.  
 Spectacles, manufacture of, 891, 931.  
 Spelios, L. G., 467.  
 Spellman, Charles C., 603.  
 Spelman family, 853.  
 Spencer, Bertram G., 438, 439.  
 Sports, see Athletics; Baseball; Basketball; Bicycles; Fish and fishing; Football; Game protection; Golf; Horse shows and racing; Hunting and fishing in Tolland; Husking bees; Skating; Societies, clubs and organizations.  
 Sports equipment manufacture, 656, 660, 664, 936.  
 Spott, James C., 488.  
 Springdale, Holyoke, 712.  
 Springdale Park, Holyoke, 713.  
 Springfield, England, 17, 18, 36, 55, 611.  
 Springfield, Ill., 635.  
 Springfield, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 9, 13, 14, 17, 18, 22, 25, 27-29, 31, 35-38, 40, 47, 49, 51, 55-57, 59-63, 65-67, 69, 89-98, 103-106, 108-110, 112-114, 116, 119, 124, 125, 128-130, 132, 134, 137, 140, 144-153, 156, 159, 160, 163, 165, 167, 170, 172, 173, 179, 183, 189, 195-198, 200, 202-207, 213-224, 226, 232, 238, 251-253, 275-281, 283, 285-287, 311, 313-325, 327-347, 351-353, 355, 356, 358, 359, 362, 364, 365, 367, 369, 370, 373-378, 401, 403-406, 419-421, 425, 428-431, 435, 436, 443, 445, 451-458, 460-504, 557-571, 575-591, 595-613, 619, 621, 624, 625, 633-635, 645-647, 653, 657-659, 662, 664, 667-669, 675, 676, 702, 704, 718, 733, 734, 736, 737, 739, 743, 753, 754, 756, 770, 777, 778, 780, 781, 789, 798-800, 803, 805, 811, 816-818, 825, 843, 846, 848, 853, 856, 857, 863, 866, 869, 870, 879, 883, 884, 889, 893, 904, 907, 909, 910, 914, 917, 921-923, 927, 928, 935, 949, 950, 960, 968, 970, 998-1002, 1004, 1006, 1007, 1012, 1017, 1023-1026, 1029, 1031, 1038, 1039, 1047, xv, frontispiece Vol. II.  
 Springfield Airport, 598.  
 Springfield Aqueduct Company, 530, 531.  
 Springfield around 1650, 73-85.  
 Springfield Artillery, 281.  
 Springfield Canal Company, 633, 634.  
 Springfield Cemetery, 60, 196, 282, 324.  
 Springfield Central High School, 561.  
 Springfield Classical High School, 560.  
 Springfield Coal and Wood Company, 493.  
 Springfield College, 467, 496, 502, 558, 613.  
 Springfield Coöperative Bank, 473.  
 Springfield Crematory, 391, 569.  
 Springfield "Daily News," 308, 653.  
 Springfield Electric Light Company, 542.  
 Springfield Elm Street School, 485, 489, 549.  
 Springfield Fire and Marine Insurance Company, 519-522.  
 Springfield Five Cents Savings Bank, 519.  
 Springfield Gas Light Company, 543.  
 Springfield Gas Machine Company, 1014.  
 Springfield Glazed Paper Company, 1009, 1016.  
 Springfield High School, 558, 559.  
 Springfield Hospital, 452, 562, 564.  
 Springfield, industrial, 507-526.  
 Springfield Institute, 577.  
 Springfield Institution for Savings, 519.  
 Springfield Italian Bank, 478.  
 Springfield Labor Company, 533.  
 Springfield Library Company, 576.  
 Springfield made a city, 385-397.  
 Springfield Manufacturing Company, 921.  
 Springfield mayor (Fordis C. Parker), boyhood memories of, 401-409.  
 Springfield, memories of, 259-272.  
 "Springfield Mountain Ballad," 1029-1031.  
 Springfield, municipal, 529-553.  
 Springfield National Bank, 517.  
 Springfield newspapers, 291-308.  
 Springfield plantation, Agawam, the mother of, 777-784.  
 Springfield, population, 3, 299, 339, 386, 461, 463-466, 469, 471, 481, 490, 493, 496, 497, 502, 503, 526, 1012.  
 Springfield Post-Office, 408.  
 Springfield Provision Company, 498.  
 Springfield Public Library; see City Library.  
 Springfield Public Market, 608.  
 "Springfield Republican," 298-308, 313, 395, 418, 419, 465, 473, 483, 490, 540, 542, 581, 582, 610, 624, 688, 963.  
 Springfield Safe Deposit and Trust Company, 519.



- Springfield Tercentenary; see Tercentenary of Springfield.  
 Springfield Third National Bank and Trust Company; 517, 519.  
 Springfield "Union," 308, 544, 610, 653.  
 Springfield Wire and Tinsel Company, 1016.  
 Springfield's old Town House, 320.  
 Squakheag (Northfield), 106, 141.  
 Squashes, 246.  
 Squier, Sylvester, 943.  
 Squires, Ezekiel, 908.  
 Stafford, Conn., 803, 810, 816, 879, 939, 958, 990.  
 Stages, 221, 222, 252, 259, 276, 278, 291-293, 306, 325, 338, 376, 404, 630, 631, 642, 667-669, 671, 765, 778, 797, 798, 811, 816, 817, 834, 879, 894, 923, 958.  
 Stamford, Conn., 885.  
 Stark, John, 745.  
 Starkey, Henry, 569.  
 State Normal School, 753, 754; also see Westfield Normal School.  
 State Primary School, 935.  
 Staten Island, N. Y., 368.  
 Statues, 57, 315, 360, 547, 566, 575, 584, 635, 719, 758.  
 Steam Power Company, 542.  
 Steam wagon, 321.  
 Steamboats, 279, 280, 287, 288, 319, 321, 322, 325, 326, 375, 376; also see Ships, steamboats, etc.  
 Stearns, Charles, 281, 474, 529, 530.  
 Stearns, George M., 636, 638-653, 658.  
 Stearns, Marion, 758.  
 Stearns, Mrs., 645-647, 651.  
 Stebbins, Aaron, 863.  
 Stebbins, Cad, 221.  
 Stebbins, Calvin, 278.  
 Stebbins, Capt., 866.  
 Stebbins Classical Institute, 455.  
 Stebbins' Dancing School, 296, 297.  
 Stebbins, Joseph, 282.  
 Stebbins, "Kit," 287.  
 Stebbins, Mr., 74, 85, 662, 663, 667.  
 Stebbins, Mrs., 84.  
 Stebbins Park, Springfield, 613.  
 Stebbins, Stephen, 863.  
 Stebbins' Tavern, 217.  
 Stebbins, Thomas, 343, 558.  
 Stebbins, Zebina, 221, 277, 343.  
 "Steep Banks," Agawam, 781.  
 Steerage Rock, 401, 803, 804, 820, 873, 949.  
 Steerage Rock and Brimfield, 803-821.  
 Steiger, Albert, 518, 608, 756.  
 Stephenson, Russell, 283.  
 Sternberg, Kurt R., 462.  
 Sterns, Henry, 295.  
 Steuben, Baron von, 331.  
 Stevens, Festus, 530.  
 Stevens, J., Arms and Tool Company, 525, 656.  
 Stevens Memorial Building, 924.  
 Stevens-Duryea Company, 524, 525, 660.  
 Steward, Antipas, 912, 913.  
 Stewart, John, 51.  
 Stiles, Ezra, 182, 184-186.  
 Stiles, Isaac, 740.  
 Still Brook, 777.  
 Stillwater, N. Y., 360.  
 Stockbridge Indians, 825.  
 "Stockholders' Day," 510.  
 Stocking, Amasa, 747.  
 Stocking, Selah, 1046.  
 Stockton, Anice Morris (Mrs. Albert Payson Terhune), 870.  
 Stoddard, Solomon, 854.  
 Stokes, murderer of Fisk, 403.  
 Stone Arabia, N. Y., 1006.  
 Stone, building; see Builders; Quarries.  
 Stone, Everett E., 532.  
 Stone, Francis, 956.  
 Stone, partner of West, 489.  
 Stone, Samuel, 42, 43.  
 Stonehaven Hotel, 598.  
 Stony Brook, 231, 233.  
 Stony Hill, 199, 219, 909, 910, 1024, 1025, 1042.  
 Stony Point, N. Y., 217.  
 Storrow, James Jackson, 1019.  
 "Storrowton" village, 1019.  
 Storrs Library Association, 901; also see Richard Salter Storrs Library.  
 Storrs, Lucius S., 510.  
 Storrs Museum, 899.  
 Storrs, Richard Salter, 892, 900, 901.  
 Storrs, Sarah, 900.  
 Stoves, 294, 630, 751, 780, 808, 810, 836, 845, 855, 887, 912, 916, 957, 1046, 1047.  
 Strathmore Inn, 971.  
 Strathmore Paper Company, 969-971, 1012, 1016.  
 Stratton, Charles Sherwood ("Tom Thumb"), 663.  
 Stratton, Mr., 636.  
 Streams, geology of, 9-14.  
 Street, Whiting, 688.  
 "Streeters" and "Hillers," 287.  
 Strikes, 345, 493, 535, 600, 673, 773.  
 Stromwald, Edward, 498.  
 Stromwald, John, 498.  
 Strong, Caleb, 218, 322, 958, 959.  
 Strong family, 455.  
 Strong, Simeon, 928.  
 Sturbridge, Worcester Co., Mass., 803, 879, 990.  
 Suffield, Conn., 99, 119, 125, 140, 159, 169, 170, 198, 214, 229, 314, 977, 1002.  
 "Suffield Equivalent Lands," 787, 788, 790.  
 Sugar Cane Creek, 536.  
 Sugar making, 402, 792, 984, 1000.



- Sunrise on the Connecticut River, frontispiece Vol. I.  
 Superior, Lake, 418.  
 Superstitions, 377-381; also see Witchcraft.  
 Surveying, 58, 104, 108, 825, 857, 863, 896.  
 Sutton, Worcester Co., Mass., 321.  
 Swampfield (Westfield), 159.  
 Swansey (now Swansea), Bristol Co., Mass., 140.  
 Swanson family, 499.  
 Swazey-Hayes Collection, 589.  
 Sweatman's Mountain, 856.  
 Sweden, and the Swedes, 497, 501, 848; also see Scandinavians.  
 Sweet, Frederick B., xv.  
 Swift River, 961, 1020.  
 Swine (hogs) and pork, 39, 41, 66, 75, 82, 109, 116, 120, 128, 142, 165, 172, 235, 236, 251, 253, 260, 276, 341, 547, 649, 681, 740, 797, 804, 810, 815, 832, 844, 846, 874, 894, 896, 897, 910, 939, 954, 1037.  
 Switzerland, 182, 533.  
 Syracuse, N. Y., 769.  
 Syria, and the Syrians, 328, 413, 414, 502, 503.  
 Taggart, Jane (widow of Nathaniel), 797.  
 Taggart Tavern, 793.  
 Tailors, 815, 836, 895, 938, 1039.  
 Tait brothers, 598.  
 Talcott, Major, 154-156.  
 Tammany Hall, 770.  
 Tannatt, George, 418.  
 Tanning and tanneries, 172, 283, 793, 815, 834, 836, 859, 868, 879, 984, 992, 993, 1038.  
 Tapley, G. W., 514.  
 Tar manufacture, 76, 908, 919, 951, 1031.  
 Tarbell, Mary Anna, 820.  
 Tariff, 66-70.  
 Tatham, West Springfield, 10, 1007, 1009.  
 Taunton, Bristol Co., Mass., 1019, xv.  
 Taverns, "ordinaries," and inns, 57, 77, 78, 90, 112, 113, 115, 164, 169, 198, 199, 202, 214, 216, 217, 221, 222, 224, 225, 230, 231, 254, 260-262, 268, 269, 276, 294, 326, 332, 333, 344, 353, 362, 377, 378, 589, 620, 624, 626, 627, 657, 667-669, 734, 754, 758, 778, 787, 789-791, 793, 796, 806, 826, 827, 829, 834, 835, 866, 874, 876, 878, 887, 894, 898, 904, 914, 921, 923, 928, 953, 959, 978, 989, 991, 1011, 1019, 1024, 1040; also see Hotels.  
 Taxes and assessments, 5, 22, 60, 74, 103, 104, 106, 114, 169, 294, 325, 568, 598, 599, 664, 685, 746, 773, 783, 878, 894, 911, 918, 928, 952, 953, 955, 956, 998, 1000, 1007, 1035, 1037.  
 Taylor, Colonel, 198.  
 Taylor, Edward, 736, 737, 739-741.  
 Taylor, John, and Company, 565.  
 Taylor, Jonathan, 84.  
 Taylor, Mr., 656.  
 Taylor, Zachary, 316, 904.  
 Taylor and Ray, 462.  
 Teachers and schools, 413-421; also see Schools.  
 Technical High School, 560, 611.  
 Telegraph, 544, 610; also see Radio and wireless telegraph.  
 Telephone, 537-540, 607, 611, 715, 894, 1041.  
 Telescope manufacture, 978.  
 Temperance movement, 190, 267, 307, 335, 391, 405, 408, 500, 815, 837, 897, 916, 1039, 1046; also see Liquor.  
 Ten Mile Brook, 267.  
 Tenney, Charles H., 543.  
 Tercentenary, from the World War to the, 595-613.  
 Tercentenary of Springfield, 561, 611-613.  
 Terhune, Albert Payson, 582, 870.  
 Terhune, Edward Payson, 582.  
 Terhune, Mary Virginia (Hawes), Mrs. ("Marion Harland"), 582.  
 Terry Island, 403.  
 Texas, 316, 613.  
 Textile manufacture, see Cloth manufacture.  
 Textile Manufacturing Company, 753.  
 Thackeray, William Makepeace, 313.  
 Thanksgiving Day, 35, 628.  
 Theatres, drama and opera, 298, 463, 464, 475, 477, 487, 526, 565, 582, 608, 664, 705, 716, 718, 902.  
 Thimbles, manufacture of, 891.  
 Third National Bank and Trust Company, 517, 519.  
 Thomas, Benjamin, 168.  
 Thomas, John, 797.  
 Thomas, Rowland, 617, 703.  
 Thomas, Thomas, 358, 486-488.  
 Thompson, Lathrop, 865.  
 Thompson, Mr., 782.  
 Thompson, William, 77.  
 Thompsonville, Conn., 288, 319, 445.  
 Thoreau, Henry David, 582.  
 Thorndike, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 958, 959.  
 Thorndike Company, 960.  
 Thorndike, Israel, 959.  
 Thorndike Manufacturing Company, 959.  
 Thorpe, Richard, 668.  
 Thrasher, Rev., 830.  
 Thread manufacture, 753, 924.  
 Three-Corner Brook, 64, 75, 153.  
 Three Mile Brook, 777, 780.  
 Three Rivers, 4, 456, 949, 959, 960.  
 Three Rivers Manufacturing Company, 960.

- "Thumb, Tom," Mr. and Mrs., see Stratton, Charles Sherwood, and Bump, Mercy Lavinia.
- Ticonderoga, N. Y., 792, 970, 1012.
- Tiffany, Francis, 347.
- Tiffany, Louis Comfort, 565.
- Tillotson, Elizur, 866, 867.
- Tilton, Peter, 181, 185, 186.
- Tinware manufacture, 931.
- Tobacco, and smoking, 253, 254, 261, 266, 267, 284, 288, 295, 297, 325, 330, 461, 466, 535, 637, 752, 753, 761, 783, 938, 978, 1041.
- Toledo, Ohio, 421.
- Tolland, Conn., 445.
- Tolland, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 856.
- Tolland for hunting and fishing, 983-985.
- Tolland, population, 983.
- "Tom Thumb," Mr. and Mrs., see Stratton, Charles Sherwood, and Bump, Mercy Lavinia.
- Tomenko, Mr., 495.
- Tomikowski, Joseph, 494.
- Tomkins, Mr., 181.
- Tong Kwoh On, 454.
- Toogood, Sarah, 839.
- Tool manufacture, 835, 836; also see Agricultural machinery.
- Tories or Loyalists, 182, 213, 263, 743, 745, 828, 887, 929.
- Torrey, Jonathan, 934.
- Torrey, Nathan, 1029.
- Tower Hill, 401, 407, 803, 806.
- Town Brook, Springfield, 47, 275, 338, 344, 386, 529; also see Garden Brook.
- Town meetings, 36, 47, 49, 55, 57, 60, 74-77, 90, 98, 105, 150, 158, 198, 213, 217, 325, 385, 413, 558, 630, 636, 669, 767, 768, 781, 790, 808, 813, 819, 827, 828, 834, 846, 864, 873, 874, 876, 877, 911, 924, 931, 952, 954, 958, 1004, 1005, 1032.
- Towne, Elizabeth, 700.
- Towne, Orange Chapin, 637.
- Towns, original, of Hampden County, 3.
- Townsley, Belle (Mrs. George Walter Vincent Smith), 584.
- Towsley, Mary (Mrs. Michael), 169, 170.
- Towsley, Mary, Miss, 169, 170.
- Towsley, Michael, 169, 170.
- Traders, trouble of the, 55-70.
- Training, military, see Military training.
- Traps, Francis, 460.
- Trask, Mr., 333, 341.
- Treat Brook, 803.
- Treat, Major, 142, 143, 147.
- Treat, Richard, 803, 806.
- Tripoli, 812.
- Trolleys, see Railways, street.
- Trotting horses, see Horse shows and racing.
- Troubles of the traders, 55-70.
- Trout Brook, 777.
- Troy, N. Y., 279, 552.
- Tsolainos, K. P., 467.
- Tung Wing, 454.
- Tupper, Benjamin, 829.
- Tuppet Counterfeiters' Cave, 993.
- Turcotte, Magloire, 459.
- Turkey, and the Turks, 451, 464-466, 468, 503, 504, 552, 585, 635, 844.
- "Turkey Pass," 239.
- Turkeys, 239, 240, 263, 843, 844, 898, 945, 1023, 1042.
- Turner, Captain, 150.
- Turner, William, 153.
- Turner's Falls, 150, 606, 721, 724, 738.
- Turners Falls Power and Electric Company, 537, 853.
- Turnpikes, see Highways.
- Turpentine manufacture, 112, 951.
- Tuttle, Moses, 854, 855.
- Twelve Mile Brook, 930, 1038.
- Twining, Elijah, 984.
- Twining, Thomas, 984.
- Two Mile Brook, 109, 737.
- Tyler, A. A., 713.
- Tyler Whip Company, 751.
- Ufford, Edward Smith, 637.
- Umbrellas, 268, 373, 376, 916.
- Uncas, Indian, 139.
- "Underground Railroad," 356, 359, 364, 486, 487, 632.
- Unemployment, 597, 600, 609, 611, 655.
- Union College, 653.
- Union, Conn., 863.
- Unions, see Societies, clubs, and organizations.
- United Colonies, 67, 69.
- United Labor Party, 600.
- United States Envelope Company, 515.
- United States Morgan Horse Farm, 1011.
- United States Whip Company, 751.
- Unusual citizens, four, 351-370.
- Upham, Edward, 1004.
- Uruguay, and cities of, 719.
- Utley, Samuel, 799.
- Vaille, Henry R., 416, 419.
- Valley Brook, 856.
- Valley Company, 280.
- Valley Forge, Pa., 744.
- "Valley Mill," 993.
- Van Buren, Martin, 316, 509.
- Van Deusen, Amoret, 758.
- Van Deusen Inn, 758.
- Van Horn, Azariah, 632.
- Van Horn, Gad, 632.
- Van Horn, John, 1001.
- Van Horn, Luther, 632.
- Van Horn Reservoir, 529.
- Van Horn, Ruel, 630.
- Van Norman Company, 451.
- Van Sickle, J. H., 560.

- Vanderbilt, Cornelius, 327, 509.  
 Vane, Henry, 93.  
 Varied early manufactures of Wales, 989-993.  
 Vegetables, see Beans; Potatoes; Pumpkins; Squashes.  
 Vendues, see Auctions.  
 Venizelos, Mr., 467.  
 Veranus Casino, 663.  
 Vermont, 10, 240, 374, 394, 442, 605, 686, 721, 724, 726, 1011, 1018.  
 Vernon, John, 469.  
 "Vernon Street Plan" for bridge, 600-604.  
 Vernon, Vt., 605, 721, 724.  
 Vesper, Harry J., 429.  
 Vessels, see Ships, steamboats, etc.  
 Vickberg, Rev., 500.  
 Virginia, 76, 110, 171, 346, 347, 355, 418, 486, 488, 588, 603, 612, 845, 1042.  
 Visiting Nurse Association, 564.  
 Vital records, see Records; see names throughout this index.  
 Volcanoes, 10.  
 Von Mitzlaff, Margarethe, 464.  
 Wachusett, Worcester Co., Mass., 157.  
 Wachusett Mountain, 873.  
 Wackenbach Box Company, 859.  
 Wadkins, Mrs., 742.  
 Wadsworth, Commissary, 797.  
 Wagner's parcel delivery, 692.  
 Wagonmaking, 295, 321, 816, 836, 896, 945, 960, 978, 993.  
 Wait, Benjamin, 157.  
 Wait, Canada, 157.  
 Wait, Jonathan, 829.  
 Wakelin, partner of MacAuslan, 715.  
 Waldorf Restaurants, 878.  
 Wales (in Europe), 18, 854, 983.  
 Wales, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 401-404, 406, 407, 803, 868, 873, 875, 878, 989-993, 1032.  
 Wales, James L., 992.  
 Wales Pond, 989.  
 Wales, population, 992.  
 Wales Tavern, 989, 991.  
 Wales, with its early varied manufactures, 989-993.  
 Walker, George, 830.  
 Walker, Isaac, 825.  
 Walker, Isabella (Mrs. James Quigley), 830, 831.  
 Walker, J. B. R., 682.  
 Walker, Jonathan, 794.  
 Wallace, A. B., xv.  
 Wallace, Andrew, 516-518, 590, 608.  
 Wallamanumps (falls of the Chicopee), 907.  
 Wallingford, Conn., 320.  
 Wallis, Gardner, 875.  
 Wallis, Thomas, 876, 878.  
 Walnut Hill, 800.  
 Walpole, N. H., 232.  
 Walsh, David L., 447, 772, 837.  
 Wampanoag Indians, 140, 143.  
 Wampum, see Money, early.  
 War between the States, see War, Civil, of 1861-'65.  
 War, Black Hawk, 329.  
 War, Civil, of 1861-'65, 226, 303, 306, 315, 316, 347, 364, 380, 387, 388, 418-421, 425, 461, 472-475, 486, 488, 508, 511, 513, 521, 570, 591, 603, 612, 632, 635, 657, 684, 686, 690, 751, 762, 780, 781, 878, 921, 922, 932, 978, 1011, 1012, 1047.  
 War of 1812-'15, 269, 281, 282, 311, 319, 322, 327, 332, 780, 885, 890, 915, 917, 944, 958.  
 War, English and French (1689), 166.  
 War, English and French (1702), 195.  
 War, French, 254, 855, 927, 950, 955, 967.  
 War, French and Indian ("Seven Years' War"), 623, 739, 745, 790, 795, 831, 888, 943, 955, 967.  
 War, Indian, of 1725-'26, 229, 927, 950.  
 War, King Philip's, 97, 125, 126, 130, 137-160, 164, 237, 253, 612, 617, 737, 853, 883, 907, 997.  
 War, Mexican, 226, 316, 419.  
 War, Pequot, see Pequot Indians.  
 War, Queen Anne's, 197.  
 War of the Rebellion, see War, Civil, of 1861-'65.  
 War, Revolutionary, 111, 131, 132, 213-226, 229, 232, 238, 240, 254, 259, 262, 263, 265, 277, 282, 284, 286, 298, 313, 330, 331, 351, 360, 386, 393, 419, 425, 471, 570, 603, 612, 623, 625, 667, 668, 743, 745, 746, 751, 780, 797, 803, 807, 812, 814, 815, 834, 836, 855-857, 859, 868, 874, 888, 911, 929, 930, 943, 944, 955-957, 977, 989, 1006, 1019, 1032, 1034, 1039.  
 War, Russo-Japanese, 495.  
 War, Shays', see Shays' Rebellion.  
 War, Spanish-American, 425-431, 441, 485.  
 War, World, 307, 468, 481, 485, 508, 525, 542, 553, 591, 595-597, 603, 716, 717, 753, 754, 782, 870, 924, 978, 1017, 1042.  
 War, World, to the Tercentenary, 595-613.  
 Waranoke, Waranoak, variants of Woronoco, *q. v.*  
 Ware, Hampshire Co., Mass., 456, 949, 960.  
 Ware River, 164, 960, 961.  
 Wargo, Paul, 442, 443.  
 Warland, William, 222.  
 Warner, Charles F., 561.  
 Warner, Samuel, 1024.  
 Warren, John, 867.  
 Warren, Joseph, 929.  
 Warren, Moses, 865, 867.  
 Warren, P., and Son, 816.



- Warren Thread Company, 753.  
 Warren, Worcester Co., Mass., 25, 789, 803, 811, 820, 921, 928; also see Western.  
 Warriner, Deacon, 1028, 1033, 1034.  
 Warriner, Jerry, 589.  
 Warriner, Nathaniel, 864.  
 Warriner, Ruel, 778.  
 Warriner, Solomon, 266, 406.  
 Warriner, William, 58.  
 Wars, Indian, 137-160; more Indian Wars, 163-173; also see index of War.  
 Warships, see Ships, steamboats, etc.  
 Washburn, William B., 701.  
 Washington, Berkshire Co., Mass., 836.  
 Washington, Booker Taliaferro, 489.  
 Washington, D. C., 300, 311, 315, 324, 327, 333, 335, 355, 370, 421, 425, 455, 473, 603, 635, 719, 820, 923, 1014.  
 Washington, George, 215-217, 222, 224, 262, 285, 313, 315, 358, 407, 746, 780, 887, 944, 962, 1006.  
 Washington, Madison, 487.  
 Wason Manufacturing Company, 458, 511, 513.  
 Wason, T. and C., 344.  
 Wason, T. W. and Company, 511.  
 Watchaug Brook, 843.  
 Water finders, witch hazel, 379, 380.  
 Water supply, 373, 374, 379, 380, 481, 529-537, 641, 659, 690, 800, 859, 877, 922, 971, 1010, 1020, 1040; also see Fire protection; Town Brook; Wells.  
 Waterpower, see Power.  
 Waters, E. S., 710, 711.  
 Watershop Pond, 406.  
 Watershops, Hampden Co., Mass., 386, 1014.  
 Watertown, Middlesex Co., Mass., 911.  
 Watson, Electa B., 799.  
 Watts, Isaac, 620, 626, 857.  
 Webb, John, 107, 110.  
 Webber, Ebenezer, 829.  
 Webber, H. G., 1041.  
 Webster, Daniel, 311, 324, 333, 339, 586.  
 Webster, Noah, 336, 337, 581, 629.  
 Weckworth, Charles F., 613.  
 Weiner, Max, 484, 485.  
 Wells (water), 10, 297, 373, 407, 530, 569, 839, 877, 1010.  
 Wells, David A., 418.  
 Wells, John, 639.  
 Wells, Royal, 639.  
 Wesley, Susanna, Mrs., 269.  
 Wesleyan Academy, 846, 1041-1047.  
 Wesson, Daniel Baird, 388, 511, 563; also see Smith and Wesson.  
 Wesson Maternity Hospital, 564.  
 Wesson Memorial Hospital, 563, 564.  
 West Branch Valley, 839.  
 West Brookfield, Worcester Co., Mass., 25, 336, 1019.  
 West Granville, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 985.  
 West Indies, 113, 134, 417, 875.  
 West Point, N. Y., 331, 419, 420, 568, 588.  
 West Rock, New Haven, Conn., 182.  
 West Springfield, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 10, 25, 140, 147, 201, 214, 217-219, 224, 231, 259, 261, 266, 275, 276, 281, 283, 317, 327, 330, 332, 390, 431, 439, 471, 481, 484, 601, 606, 607, 668, 669, 684, 714, 718, 778, 780, 853, 908, 956, 997-1020, 1034, xvi.  
 West Springfield Chemical Company, 1016.  
 West Springfield, home of the Eastern States Exposition, 997-1020.  
 West Springfield Library, 1010.  
 West Springfield, population, 1005.  
 West Stafford, Conn., 445.  
 West and Stone, 489.  
 Western (now Warren), 296, 928, 954.  
 Western Massachusetts Bank and Trust Company, 600.  
 Western Union Telegraph Company, 538.  
 Westfield, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4, 10, 55, 103, 106, 114, 125, 140, 149, 151, 152, 156-159, 163, 165, 166, 172, 217, 229, 286, 294, 334, 362, 363, 425, 463, 499, 531, 544, 590, 597, 600, 604-606, 609, 716, 718, 733-773, 787-789, 794, 825, 826, 854, 859, 923, 943, 945, 967, 968, 975, 976, 978, xvi.  
 Westfield Academy, 325, 747, 748, 755, 759, 766, 769.  
 Westfield Athenæum, 755, 756, 760.  
 Westfield Bicentennial, 751.  
 Westfield High School, 759-765, 772.  
 Westfield Manufacturing Company, 753.  
 Westfield Marble and Sandstone Company, 756.  
 Westfield Normal School, 744, 748; also see State Normal School.  
 Westfield River, 4, 96, 240, 531, 532, 536, 606, 755, 757, 769, 833, 838, 967, 979.  
 Westfield River Paper Company, 968.  
 Westfield State Sanatorium, 755, 757.  
 Westfield, or Woronoco, 733-773.  
 Westfield's 250th Anniversary, 758.  
 Westhampton, Hampshire Co., Mass., 189, 239, 892.  
 Westinghouse plant, see New England Westinghouse plant.  
 Westinghouse radio station, 598.  
 Weston, Middlesex Co., Mass., 829.  
 Wethersfield, Conn., 27, 28, 66.  
 Whale, a Nantucket, 934, 935.  
 Whalley, Edward, 177-179, 182, 184, 185, 187.  
 Whalley, Miss (Mrs. William Goffe), 178.  
 Whately, Franklin Co., Mass., 586, 985, 1019.



- Wheat, 74, 116, 156, 172, 245, 268, 623.  
 669, 740, 856, 865, 951, 978, 1024, 1026.  
 Wheat, William George, 518, 519, 608.  
 Wheeler, Thomas, 140.  
 Wheelock, Eleazar, 894.  
 Whigs, 213, 263, 285, 286, 745, 904.  
 Whip manufacture, 749-751, 753.  
 Whistler, James, 287.  
 Whistler, Major, 287.  
 White, Chauncey, 301-303.  
 White, Daniel Granger, 1010.  
 White, Moses, 1043.  
 White Mountains, 11.  
 White Plains, N. Y., 331.  
 White River, 268.  
 White, Sewall, 781, 1005.  
 Whitefield, George, 204, 205, 741, 854, 857.  
 Whitelocke, Bulstrode, 95.  
 White's Tavern, 778.  
 Whiting, Charles Goodrich, 395, 581.  
 Whiting farm, 717.  
 Whiting mills, 737.  
 Whiting Paper Company, 701, 718, 720,  
 723.  
 Whiting, Sidney, 714.  
 Whiting, William, 692, 700, 702, 716, 719.  
 Whiting, William Fairfield, 693, 719, xvi.  
 Whitman College, 798.  
 Whitman, Lyman, 780.  
 Whitmore Paper Company, 718.  
 Whitney, Doctor, 219.  
 Whitney, M. B., 755.  
 Whitney papermaking system, 1041.  
 Whittington, George, 576.  
 Wickwire Spencer Steel Company, 960.  
 Wico Electric and Manufacturing Com-  
 pany, 1016.  
 Wiebe, Edward, 514.  
 Wight, Emerson, 477, 541, 1013.  
 Wightman, Jesse, 779.  
 Wigs, 205, 206, 221, 259, 261, 322, 324,  
 622, 853, 1028.  
 Wigwam Brook, 950.  
 Wigwam Hill, 1027, 1028, 1036.  
 Wilbraham, Hampden Co., Mass., 3, 4,  
 218, 219, 286, 336, 339, 498, 525, 843,  
 846, 863-865, 868, 907-909, 911, 917,  
 930, 958, 962, xvi.  
 Wilbraham Academy, 428, 1040, 1043,  
 1047.  
 Wilbraham and its academy, 1023-1047.  
 Wilbraham Aqueduct Company, 1040.  
 Wilbraham Centennial, 1029.  
 Wilbraham Mountain, 1047.  
 Wilbraham, population, 1029.  
 Wilbraham State Game Farm, 1042.  
 Wilcox, E. K., 427.  
 Wilcox, George, 848, 849.  
 Wild Flower Contest, 695.  
 Wildcats, 235-237.  
 Wilkes, Charles, 328.  
 Willard, Abijah, 825, 828.  
 Willard, Major, 141.  
 Willey, Joel, 908.  
 William the Conqueror, 18.  
 William Whiting School, 716.  
 Williams, Bishop, 472.  
 Williams, C. A., 945.  
 Williams College, 414, 418, 772, 798, 885.  
 Williams, Eleazer, 344, 892, 893.  
 Williams, Ephraim, 796.  
 Williams, Eunice, 890, 892.  
 Williams, John, 825, 865, 866, 892, 901.  
 Williams, Katherine, 890.  
 Williams, Rev., 778.  
 Williams, Roger, 36, 95.  
 Williams, Stephen, 825, 843, 885-890, 892,  
 893, 895.  
 Williams, Thomas, 892.  
 Williamsburg, Hampshire Co., Mass., 249,  
 706, 922.  
 Williamson, Lillian, Mrs., 1010.  
 Williamstown, Berkshire Co., Mass., 623.  
 Willimansett, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 230,  
 231, 280, 619, 620, 636, 637, 657-659,  
 662, 675, 920.  
 Willimantic, Conn., 445.  
 Wills and bequests, 98, 129, 196, 199, 470,  
 688, 719, 797, 864, 901, 936, 992, 1034.  
 Wilson, Mr., 782.  
 Wilson, Woodrow, 597, 772.  
 Winchester, Elhanan, 991.  
 Windham, Conn., 200, 201.  
 Windsor, Conn., 27, 28, 49-51, 63, 66, 81,  
 109, 133, 146, 154, 229, 278, 279, 734,  
 739.  
 Windsor, Vt., 280, 812.  
 Windsor Locks, Conn., 44, 403, 721.  
 Wing, Alice M., 561.  
 Winitsky, H., 482.  
 Winnebago Indians, 588.  
 Winona Paper Company, 712.  
 Winrote, Jesse, 353.  
 Winslow's Clock Shop, 283.  
 Winter, Dwight R., 611.  
 Winthrop, John, 20-22, 24, 27, 30, 56, 61,  
 67, 76, 873.  
 Wire manufacture, 960, 962, 1016.  
 Wirtz, Mr., 686.  
 Witch hazel divining-rods, 379, 380.  
 Witchcraft, 63, 78-85, 94, 378, 379, 901,  
 990.  
 Witt, Stillman, 352.  
 Woburn, Middlesex Co., Mass., 368.  
 Wolcott, Roger, 430, 431.  
 Wolves, 60, 74, 116, 120, 170, 235, 797,  
 829, 832, 833, 909, 915, 969.  
 Wood, Albert T., 903.  
 Wood, D. S., 352.  
 Wood, David, 864.  
 Wood, Mark, 710, 711.  
 Wood and Merritt, 921.

- Woodbridge, Jemima, Mrs., 999.  
 Woodbridge, John, 999.  
 Woodchucks, 236, 237, 830.  
 Woodcock, John, 24, 49, 57, 58, 777, 997.  
 Woodford, Thomas, 58.  
 Woodruff, Caroline (Mrs. Chester Harding), 332.  
 Woodruff, T. T., 511.  
 Woodstock, Conn., 24, 812, 949.  
 Woodturning, 798, 836, 960.  
 Woodward, Elisha, 865.  
 Woolen goods and mills, 482, 487, 521, 538, 656, 780, 783, 810, 865, 868, 919, 920, 930, 931, 936, 951, 955, 959, 960, 1038, 1039.  
 Woolen mills, early, of Monson, 927-940.  
 Worcester, Worcester Co., Mass., 217, 218, 223, 282, 286, 293, 336, 388, 393, 394, 416, 493, 641, 771, 788, 811, 816, 825, 879, 951, 962.  
 Worcester County, Mass., 125.  
 Workhouse, in 1802, 278.  
 Works, Mr., 402.  
 Works Progress Administration (WPA), 600, 935.  
 World War to the Tercentenary, 595-613.  
 World's End Brook and Meadow, 869.  
 World's Fair of 1852, 325.  
 Woronoco, or Waranoke, Hampden Co., Mass., 4, 38, 43, 55, 56, 106, 109, 110, 133, 240, 968, 971.  
 Woronoco, included in Russell, 967-971.  
 Woronoco (Waranoke) Indians, 31, 39, 40, 43, 137.  
 Woronoco Paper Company, 970, 1012.  
 Woronoco Park, Westfield, 752.  
 Woronoco, or Westfield, 733-773.  
 Woronoke Lake, 969.  
 Worth, William, 355.  
 Worthington, Colonel, 569.  
 Worthington, Frances, 263.  
 Worthington, Hampshire Co., Mass., 829.  
 Worthington, John, 213, 216, 222, 260, 263, 264, 268, 275, 315, 745.  
 Worthington, Miss (Mrs. Jonathan Bliss), 213.  
 Worthington's Inn, 778.  
 Worthy Paper Company, 780, 783.  
 Wrentham, Norfolk Co., Mass., 820.  
 Wright, Benjamin, 197, 667.  
 Wright, Deacon, 89.  
 Wright, George F., 345, 960.  
 Wright, George M., 962.  
 Wright, John S., 959.  
 Wright, Lieut., 618.  
 Wright Pond, 692.  
 Wright, W. E., 525.  
 Wright Wire Company, 960, 962.  
 Wrunertha, an Indian, 26.  
 Wyllys, Amy (Mrs. John Pynchon), 66, 149.  
 Wyllys, George, 66.  
 Yale College and University, 182, 202, 263, 266, 314, 322, 409, 454, 455, 560, 746, 858, 888, 891, 929, 932, 1001, 1002.  
 "Yellow Day," 762.  
 Yellow Lily Pond, 961.  
 Yeorg, Mayor, 729.  
 York, Conservation Commissioner, 782.  
 Yorktown, Va., 213.  
 Young, John B., 489.  
 Young Men's Institute, 577.  
 Young Men's Literary Association, 577.  
 Yung Wing, 932.  
 Zangwill, Israel, 485.  
 Zipelius, F., 588.  
 Ziter, Fred, 503.















